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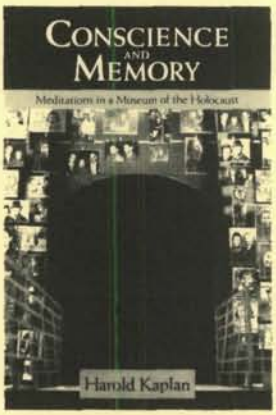

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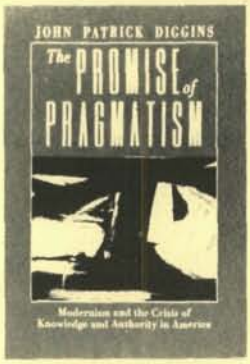

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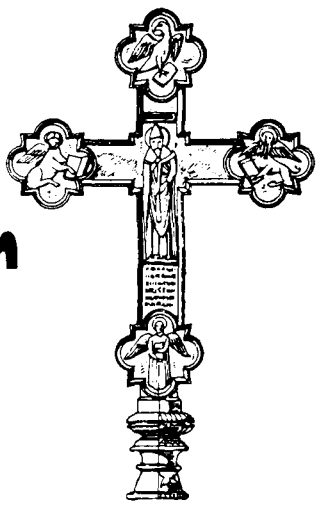

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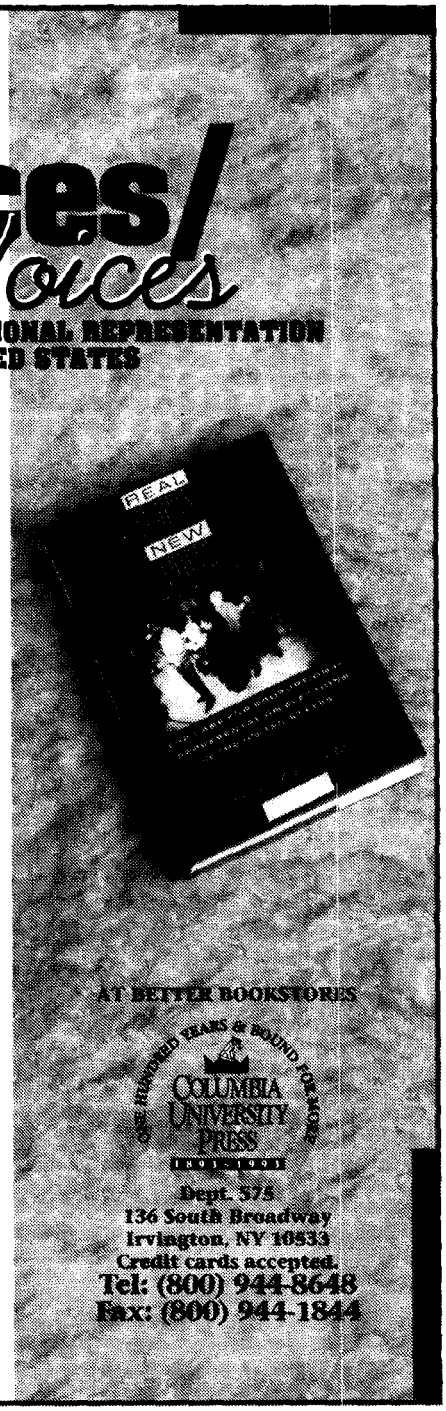

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Boy N the Hood

ARISTIDES

Although after a while I'd like a chance to have a look at your insurance program, just now I'm curious to know if you own a cemetery plot. My guess is that if you're under fifty, you probably don't. As it happens, I do, but only because my father bought six such plots many years ago, when he himself was in his thirties. In those days people bought cemetery plots because they believed two things that I am not at all sure we believe today: first, that they were going to die and that this could happen at any time; second, that they would die in the very city where they were living, even though their death might be forty or fifty years away.

In our day, as is well known, through careful diet and exercise, death can be put off just about forever; one can live well into one's nineties and then settle back to enjoy the delights of slow cancers or fast dementia. As for dying in the city in which one has lived, a more preposterous notion scarcely exists. I, like you, shall doubtless die in Geneva, Paris, or Palm Springs, but surely not where I live now, not here, surely bloody not. Or so many of us think, doubtless quite wrongly.

I visit my cemetery plot, located on the rim of a lower-middle-class suburb northwest of Chicago, fairly often—ten, maybe twelve times a year. The drive takes thirty-five or forty minutes. My dead are buried there. I find the setting peaceful. Hungry though I am for life as the next fellow, sometimes I think that lying under the ground here would not be such a bad deal. My own plan is to be cremated, so "lying" isn't quite the right word; but I do intend for my "cremains"—to use the spiffy new funeral director's word that sounds like nothing so much as a substitute for real cream for one's coffee—to be set down here. The way I look at it is that this place figures to be my last neighborhood.

I have always lived in neighborhoods, so why not end up in one? Chicago, the city of my birth and upbringing, Chicago, that city of little villages known as neighborhoods, has turned me into a neighborhood guy, with some of the parochialism but also the quotidian pleasures the phrase implies. I like neighborhood comforts: familiarity, easy access to necessities, the feeling of slightly distant but nonetheless quite real community. I like the potential for friendliness in neighborhoods. I am someone who becomes friendly with shopkeepers, bank tellers, mailmen, and UPS and Federal Express deliverymen. I am on a first-name basis with my barber and am pleased to be known at local restaurants.

None of this, let it be understood, means that I'm not ready to move on fairly short notice. I am not quite in the condition of Philip Larkin, who wrote to his friend Monica Jones: "To people like me life is only bearable if they think they might move." Larkin was well into his thirties before he lived in his first unfurnished apartment, and, when he did, the experience of buying furniture was more than a little daunting to him. At the same time that Larkin had no taste for what he called "abroad," he also yearned to be among the class of people I think of as permanent transients. To such people, a too-settled life is redolent of the stolid, the middle-aged, the spiritually inert, and it leaves them very edgy. "Next year in Jerusalem," Jews of an older generation used to say, lifting strong schnapps to their lips. "Next year anywhere else but here," the permanent transient thinks.

I used to think myself a permanent transient, at least in my soul, and at times I still do.

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My problem is that it is too easy to imagine myself living elsewhere: in Florence, in small towns in Nebraska, in British Columbia, just about anywhere, really, but the YMCA. I do so less and less, though, as the years go by. The feeling of familiarity that life in neighborhoods gives is congenial to me, even though I occasionally worry about growing too comfortable in it.

The first neighborhood I can remember was greatly circumscribed—it was, in fact, a hotel. During the early 1940s, before my younger brother was born, my parents and I lived in the Pratt Lane, a hotel on the north side of Chicago. (Living in hotels in those days must have been moderately fashionable. In *The Old Bunch*, a novel by Meyer Levin, a young Jewish lawyer's having begun to make it is shown by his moving into the Jarvis Apartment Hotel. Thirty or so years later, I myself briefly lived in the Jarvis, which was by then a bit down on its uppers.) At the Pratt Lane one received a fair amount of service: there was a switchboard; maids came in; and I believe laundry and dry cleaning were picked up and taken out to be done.

My first memories of the Pratt Lane go back to when I was four. I recall something resembling a regular social round in the hotel. My parents had a number of friends there. I must have been one of only a few children living in the hotel at the time, and I remember getting lots of attention. "Oh," I recall a chubby woman saying, bending to pinch my cheek, "this one's going to be a real heartbreaker." Like my father's prophecy that I would one day turn out to be a terrific salesman, this, too, proved to be untrue.

Not long after this, we moved a few blocks away to an apartment on Sheridan Road, a busy thoroughfare in a neighborhood that, though rather grand, still had an intimate feeling to it. In our courtyard building lived the sister of Barney Ross, once simultaneously the lightweight and welterweight champion of the world. Sam Cowling, a comedian on a then-famous radio show called "The Breakfast Club," lived in the next building. But the great figure on the block was the pharmacist, Mr. Henry West, a tidy, compact man with rimless glasses and a salt-and-pepper mustache, whose smock lent him a certain authoritativeness. It was to Mr. West that one went for advice about minor ailments—a burn, a sore throat, a sprain—advice that he tendered with a measured sobriety. The soda jerk at West's Pharmacy was a boy named Jimmy Kogen; I met him again almost fifty years later and recognized him instantly by his wide and winning smile.

Although I remember walking with my mother to the butcher shop on Morse Avenue—with the war on and meat rationing enforced, it was a key location as well as a depot for neighborhood gossip—for the most part, my life was lived on the block. Lots of kids lived in the nearby three-story apartment buildings, and in the spring and summer evenings there were elaborate games of Kick the Can, Red Rover, Red Rover, and Capture the Flag. Lake Michigan was just a block to the east, and on occasion there would be evening beach parties where hot dogs and marshmallows were cooked on sticks over a fire. Sunday mornings men played softball on Farwell Beach, and on autumn afternoons the football team of Sullivan High School practiced on a field fronting the lake.

Because air-conditioning was not yet available, on steamy summer nights my parents and I sometimes went to the movies. Often, as I remember, I went alone with my father; by then my mother was staying home with my baby brother. I don't believe we ever inquired about what movies were playing or when they began. We just went to the movies, and when we walked in in the middle of the film, we stayed to see the part we had missed. The neighborhood was rich in movie theaters: there were The Coed, The 400, The Northshore, The Howard, and, easily most impressive of the lot, The Granada, which, in its rococo exterior and Aladdinish decoration, was out of the Arabian Nights sired by San Simeon.

A joke of those days told about a little boy with a determined expression who was noticed circling his block over and over again. When asked why he was doing this, he replied that he was running away from home but wasn't permitted to cross the street. In fact, looking back, I am now impressed by the freedom I was given as a little boy. At age seven or eight—often, true, in the company of boys a year or so older than I—I was allowed to take a bus or the El to downtown Chicago or to a movie in another neighborhood or to a baseball game at Wrigley Field. Cities not only seemed but were less fearsome. Nuns in habit

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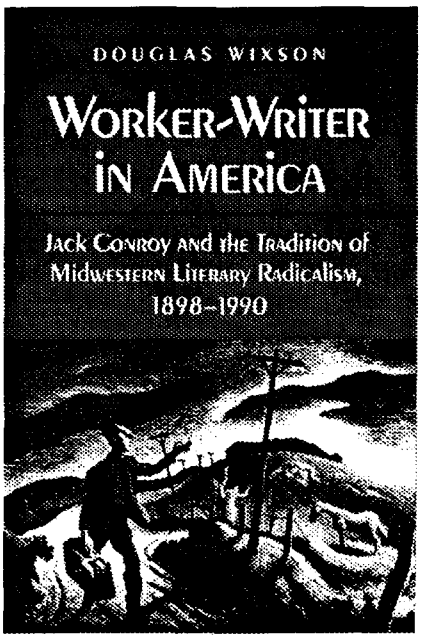

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and priests in collar were part of the cityscape. Owing to all the priestly Bing Crosby, Barry Fitzgerald, and Pat O'Brien movies I saw, I took especial pleasure, on buses or on the El, in asking, "Would you like my seat, Sister?" I must have been attempting to pass myself off as a Catholic.

The neighborhood I have been describing seemed to be half-Jewish, half-gentile, the latter half dominated, I retrospectively conclude, by Catholics. The large Catholic church in the neighborhood was Saint Jerome's—never called Jerry's as Saint Timothy's in the next neighborhood we lived in was called Timmy's. Catholic Chicagoans in those days often described their neighborhoods by the name of their parish. If you were not a Catholic but a kid interested in sports, you might describe where you lived by the name of the nearest public park and gym: "We live over by Chase Park." (Chicagoans have always been spendthrift with prepositions.) If you were a politician, you would describe where you lived by the number of your ward, possibly even your precinct.

When I was ten, we moved to a neighborhood that was changing. We, it turned out, were among the agents of change. The neighborhood was changing from middle-class German and Swedish to on-the-rise Jewish. If there was bad feeling about the change—and I suspect there was—we heard about it only fleetingly. The neighborhood was changing so quickly that Jews were soon, if not in, often close to the majority. Still, there was a decent mixture: I went to school with kids named Swenson, Christiansen, Duncan, and Maccaluso. On the way to school I passed a house with an elegant Japanese rock garden; a Dr. Varsabedian practiced medicine out of his home; a man named George S. May, an industrial engineer who is said to have had a collection of fifty-six Hawaiian sports shirts and who started the world's first big-money golf tournament at a country club called Tam O'Shanter, lived in a house across the alley from a three-flat building that he used as his office; in front of the house, a black chauffeur often polished one of May's series of dark blue Cadillacs.

The year was 1947, the economy was settling down, and things were beginning to look up after the war. The main shopping drag in the neighborhood—Devon Avenue, with the accent on the second syllable—seemed to grow more and more prosperous: filled with fine stores, none of them franchises, none of them owned by somebody living in Houston. Much new building of an undistinguished kind was under way. Perhaps owing in part to the infusion of so much new blood, there was a spirit of onward and upward about the neighborhood. Things were good, and nobody could give a good reason why they shouldn't get better.

Things had begun to look up for me personally. Ten years old and in a new school, I was taken by my classmates to be a superior athlete. I wasn't, but I was a very good mimic, and I could imitate a good athlete, which at ten is pretty much the same thing as being one. Suddenly I found myself a T-formation quarterback, a shortstop, the point guard (though the position wasn't yet called that) on the basketball team. Since sports were the only way of acquiring prestige among boys in the neighborhood, I, clearly, had arrived. Later, at a high school with roughly three thousand students, such athletic prowess as I was thought to possess soon received a more accurate measure, and the best I was able to play was frosh-soph basketball and tennis. But the mark of high self-regard had been permanently left: somewhere in my mind I still think myself a T-formation quarterback, a shortstop, a point guard, somehow or other a main player.

Two of my closest friends to this day grew up with me in this neighborhood. In good Chicago fashion, one has returned to the very block, the very apartment, where he grew up and raised three children of his own. I have lived on very different blocks since departing, yet if the veneer of worldliness were scratched off me, I know that many of the ideas acquired in that neighborhood would still be in place. From this neighborhood I continue to draw on memories that have sustained me long since moving away. Once, under a local anesthetic for a minor operation and needing to divert my mind to pleasant thoughts, I remembered myself at age thirteen, a football under my arm, returning at dusk in late October to the 6600 block of North Campbell Avenue, greeted by the fine smell of burning leaves and the sight of orange flames flickering in the gutters along the street.

Along with the public parks—Greenbrier was the name of one, Indian Boundary another—restaurants were among the neigh-

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borhood's chief social institutions. These tended to be owned by Greeks (Kofield's) or Jews (Friedman's). Open around the clock, Friedman's Delicatessen was a place where, past my sixteenth year, I could depend on finding someone I knew at almost any hour. Fast food had not yet been invented, but fast talk had, and at Friedman's it was one of the *spécialités de la maison.* Everyone was a wise guy; everyone knew—or pretended to know—the score. Lots of talk about sports figures, crime, and fabulous deals floated, with the cigar smoke, to the ceiling all through the night. Men going off to early jobs stopped there for breakfast rather than wake their wives at five in the morning.

I don't know in what year Friedman's went out of business, but, if I were the local historian, I would mark the neighborhood's change from that date. I now live only a few miles from the old neighborhood, and I occasionally drive through it, flush with nostalgia and sadness. The eastern portion of Devon Avenue is now dominated by East Indian merchants—grocery, jewelry, sari shops. Westward, past California Avenue, there are Orthodox Jews in great number, many of them in Hasidic dress: little boys, earlocks flapping, clutch their bewigged mothers' hands. The last things I bought on West Devon, at a place called Lieberman Monument Works, Inc., were tombstones.

I have also gone back to eat at a deli on West Devon called The Bagel, where huge portions of forbidden food were provided—forbidden not by Jewish law but by contemporary medicine. In The Bagel one felt one could have been brought down by the secondary cholesterol; a sound health-care plan would call for such a restaurant to keep two cardiologists on the premises at all times. When I went there I took my life on my fork and ate enormous salami omelettes. But the clientele at The Bagel—no longer the dashing liars from Friedman's with their stories about stock-market killings, Cuban cigars, and great deals on cars—was elderly: tremors, walkers, toupees, patently false teeth were found at every table; to the dolorous music of time, the prostate shuffle was danced. The restaurant did a brisk—also brisket—lunch and Sunday morning business, but very little in the evening. Finally, The Bagel packed up its artery-clogging calories and moved elsewhere, leaving an empty corner as a symbol of a neighborhood that has seen much better days. Its exit may have added a year or two to my life, yet I think of it with sadness. If I were a composer, I should one day like to write a Pavane for West Devon.

Old neighborhoods have not only a certain character but an archaeology. This archaeology, like the many layers of Troy, reveals different lives and ways of living. On the doorjambs of some of the apartments of South Shore, a neighborhood in Chicago that is now black, one finds the mezuzahs of former Jewish inhabitants. In a Mexican neighborhood one finds a stately Gothic Catholic church or high school named after an Irish or Italian saint. One day in Kenwood, out of a mansion befitting an industrialist in a Dreiser novel, I saw Muhammad Ali, the former heavyweight champion, emerge with an infant in his arms and an entourage in his wake.

The absence of a neighborhood feeling is what makes life in so many suburbs—and, to jump up my generalization a good bit, in much of the western United States—less than enticing to those of us raised in genuine neighborhoods. Perhaps the first qualification for a neighborhood is that one be able to travel it on foot, which eliminates most claims for neighborhood status for cities in southern California, Arizona, and Wyoming. A second qualification is individual ownership of retail establishments. The fewer the franchise restaurants and shops, the better. Neighborliness requires that the owners of shops and restaurants are on the premises and have a stake in the community. Much better that the restaurant you're eating in isn't owned by two guys in High Point, North Carolina, and doesn't serve meat that was half-cooked and frozen in Seattle.

A neighborhood ought to have something resembling regular rhythms: a flow of people going into and coming out of it, a weekday and a Saturday and then a quite different Sunday feeling about it. Institutions, whether they be churches, schools, libraries, public parks, saloons, or banks, ought to play a serious role in neighborhood life. A neighborhood does well, too, to have a few characters—make that more than a few characters. I sometimes wonder if I qualify as one of the characters in my own neighborhood.

I moved to a different neighborhood

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roughly five years ago. I had lived in my former neighborhood for something like eighteen years. (I even wrote an essay about it with the title "Unwilling to Relocate." As you can see, I was—willing to relocate, that is, about ten blocks to the north.) My current neighborhood is in central Evanston. Evanston is the first town north of Chicago. We have an apartment on the sixth floor of a building on the edge of what is called downtown. Two or so blocks to the east is Lake Michigan. Closer in are some very grand houses, many of them qualifying as mansions and a few selling for more than a million dollars, stately pleasure domes lived in by people who have mastered the tricks of moneymaking. From the windows of the room in which I work, which face south, I can see the side and portico of a retirement home, the backs of other apartment buildings, a Greek restaurant and some shops, a Christian Science Reading Room, the former office of Bell Telephone, the upper floors of a Holiday Inn (in whose sign the letter *i* doesn't light so that, at night, in green neon, I read Hol day Inn), and the slender steeple of a Baptist church where I used to go to hear ancient music concerts.

From my living room window I can see the Evanston Library, which is less than a block away. (The old building, found to be too small, has been razed, and a much larger one is being built.) Just beyond it is the Omni-Orrington Hotel. Across the street from our building, to the west, is a nearly block-long modern building that used to house the Washington National Insurance Company, once the largest employer in Evanston. Since the company has moved out, the building will soon meet the wrecker's ball and be replaced by a high-rise apartment building. My view to the north is of the red-brick, white-trim mansion of the Women's Club of Evanston; off in the distance, I can see the rounded top of the Baha'i Temple and the steeple of the Garrett Theological Seminary. Nearer by—less than a block away, in fact—is the Women's Christian Temperance Union, much made fun of by H. L. Mencken and others during Prohibition.

Sometimes I stand at my living room window, a glass of wine in my hand, and, facing the WCTU's three recently rehabilitated cottages and its red-brick administration building, I drink to the memory of Frances Willard, the founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. ("Here's lookin' at you, kid.") I remember the Evanston of my boyhood as a town where Miss Willard would have felt quite comfortable—a town of white-haired (blue-rinse) dowagers and little tearooms serving genteel yet meager meals followed by rather pathetic cobblers for dessert. Evanston always had a large black population, historically there to provide servants for the rich suburban Northshore. Yet the feeling in the town was White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, and not a little boring.

In the age before malls and discount stores, Evanston was also the main shopping center for the suburbs and towns north and northwest of Chicago. If the town had unimpressive restaurants, owing in part to its issuing no liquor licenses, it did have good shops: a branch of Marshall Field's, superior men's and women's clothing stores, shops in which to buy china and silverware and fireplace equipment, furriers, and a superior grocery store with an excellent butcher shop called Smithfield's. All these shops from the *ancien régime* are now gone, with the exception of a book and office-supply store called Chandler's, which still sells Boy, Girl, and Cub Scout uniforms and runs a creaking elevator to its second and third floors.

Because of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Evanston was a dry town. Students at Northwestern drove twelve or so blocks to Howard Street, the south side of which was in the city of Chicago, for the mild sin of a few beers. Today booze can be served in restaurants, and so there are a few bars in town connected to restaurants and even a couple of package liquor stores. No booze meant poor restaurants, which was regrettable, though, for myself, I did not greatly regret the absence of a bar life. I tend to go along with Hemingway, who, I believe, once said that bars were fit chiefly for finding fights or complaisant women.

In his brief essay "The Moon under Water," George Orwell describes a perfect pub. It serves its beer in china mugs with handles, which he maintains makes beer taste better; its barmaids call everyone "Dear" but never "Ducks"; its clientele consists mostly of regulars who "go there for conversation as much as for the beer"; there is a garden out back in which children can play; it provides a solid lunch for a reasonable price; and it "sells to-

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bacco as well as cigarettes, and it also sells aspirins and stamps, and is obliging about letting you use the telephone." The only problem with this pub, as Orwell reveals near the end of his essay, is that it doesn't exist. "The Moon under Water," for such is the name of the place, is his fantasy of the perfect pub.

My own fantasy is of the perfect neighborhood Italian restaurant. As it happens, roughly a hundred yards from where I live there is an Italian restaurant. But its portions are too small and the food is not good enough; the owner unconvincingly addresses his customers as "Gumba"; and Verdi and Puccini tapes play much too loudly. None of this has kept it from being a fairly successful restaurant, but it remains far from my ideal plate of pasta. Other Italian restaurants in the neighborhood similarly fail to meet my requirements, which are that the food be flavorful, plentiful, and reasonably priced and that no pretension be observed in its preparation or serving. My perfect restaurant could be northern Italian, but it is more likely to be southern—a restaurant with tomato sauce at the heart of its menu and no hint of what a friend of mine calls "factory veal." The owner should be on the premises, a presence but not be a distraction. I'll know this restaurant when I see it. The other day, out of town, I walked into such a restaurant and knew it when I saw the owner, a man in his early seventies, sitting on a chair near the cash register complaining about the waywardness of his children. "This place is going to have great food," I said, and it did.

But that, as I say, was out of town. In town, in my neighborhood, we do have an impressive variety of restaurants, ranging from Thai to Mexican, from Texas barbecue to Middle Eastern, from German to Vietnamese. At the best Chinese restaurant I am taken to my favorite table when it is available. Three Greek restaurants are in walking distance of my apartment, but I am partial to one, where I prefer to sit, a non-smoker, in the smoking section, for a more interesting collection of customers assembles there. The waitresses are not actresses between jobs or poets awaiting grants, but full-time, professional waitresses, many of whom are of a certain age and who, having been around the track a time or two, show their mileage. I sometimes dine alone here, usually ordering two fried eggs, over, done fairly hard, and a side order of excellent ham; hash brown potatoes and toast come with the meal. Reading, cigarette smoke billowing around my head, ingesting heavy cholesterol, I exist in a condition of temporary contentment.

On my most recent trip, my pleasure was diluted by conversation between a waitress still in her twenties and a waitress perhaps in her early fifties as they took a cigarette break at a table near mine. The younger waitress, in tears, told the older waitress that her husband had been complaining about her getting fat and was being damn unpleasant about it. The older waitress blew up and told her not to take any such crap off him and to remind him that he married her not for her figure but for what was in her heart. She went on to report that she herself had had a number of operations, including a mastectomy. She began to warm to her subject—it's what you are, not what you look like, that matters—and instructed the younger waitress, who was softly crying, to put a stop to such behavior on the part of her husband and to do so right now.

I found this very impressive. More than impressive, I found it heroic; I wanted to stand and applaud. This eavesdropper's peek into the life of the restaurant made me understand it for the first time as a kind of family, where people turn to one another in troublous times, and it made me like it even more.

What the blue-rinse dowagers would make of the multiculturalness of current-day Evanston I do not know. But multicultural—without the offending "ism"—it surely is. A series of adjoining shops at which I have done business include, going from south to north, a shoe-repair store run by a recent Mexican immigrant, a compact disc shop run by a young black man whose assistants include a punky fellow with magenta hair who on occasion sports a nose ring, a photo shop run by a family of Middle Easterners, a shop selling eyeglasses run by Soviet Jews, an empty corner store, then, around the corner to the west, a jewelry and dress shop run by Sikhs.

The empty corner store was once a young women's clothing shop, which sold modestly priced blouses, skirts, jeans—what in the trade I believe are called separates. Its closing leaves a hole in the block; the effect is rather like a lost front tooth. Stores go in and out of business in the neighborhood with too great a regularity for my taste, not to speak of the taste—and fortunes—of the owners. The vast

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shopping malls to the west and north have taken a resounding toll on Evanston's shopping. Yet just when the game seems nearly done, someone new steps in to pick up the dice.

For a long while the closing of a discount drugstore left a key corner shop vacant; it was eventually filled by a Radio Shack. A Scandinavian furniture shop moved to a small location down the block, leaving another gaping hole, which, pleasing to report, was filled by a Barnes & Noble bookstore, a superstore. This has greatly bucked up the neighborhood, which is already rich in bookstores. I am in walking distance of five new- and six used-book shops. Of the new-book stores, Barnes & Noble is the main one. Its stock is large but not nearly as large as the tolerance with which it is run. At the front of the store, people stand for full half hours reading magazines set out on three racks. Nobody ever remonstrates with them. Upstairs, where children's books, paperbacks, and remainders are on display, coffee and pastries are sold, and a person can drink caffè latte and munch away on a fudge brownie while riffling through a $75 book on the French Impressionists. Nobody ever says a word. I tremble. One day, watching a young boy dribbling the crumbs from a chocolate-chip scone over a lavishly illustrated book on railroads and another illustrated book on baseball, I thought, Here, clearly, is a case of killing two books with one scone.

I sometimes meet a friend or student for late afternoon coffee. I have come to prefer late afternoon coffee to lunch, which Henry James used to call that "matutinal monster," because a socializing lunch had the effect on him, as it often does on me, of making a return to serious work difficult. Sometimes I have coffee at Barnes & Noble, sometimes at Starbucks. More often, though, I go to another coffee shop called The Unicorn, which is owned by a near contemporary who used to play basketball for Evanston Township High School and who reads this magazine and treats me very kindly. At a corner table of The Unicorn one day I saw four other old Evanston hands, men also in their fifties who are former high school athletes, men who never really left the neighborhood. Did the wider world never attract them? Or was the neighborhood, with its familiarity, as the *Rubáiyát* has it, paradise enow?

I don't read the *Evanston Review*—I don't read a Chicago newspaper either—so I cannot say whether crime is up or down in Evanston generally or in my neighborhood in particular. In my news bible, the *New York Times* (one of the books of the Apocrypha is closer to it), I read the results of yet another of those unnecessary surveys and learned that more than 20 percent of Americans do not feel safe walking in their own neighborhoods after dark. I am not fearful of being out after dark to pick up a VCR movie, a bottle of wine, or a prescription, or to return from a nearby concert. But nowadays, such is the tenor of contemporary life, one looks over one's shoulder even when opening the refrigerator.

Looking over one's shoulder in the streets of downtown Evanston, one is likely to see not a mugger but a beggar. Beggars, sometimes two or three of them, stand on the corner before the largest neighborhood drugstore. On this corner and others in town, a monthly newspaper called *Streetwise* is sold for a dollar to help the homeless. *Streetwise* vendors also await one outside neighborhood supermarkets. Young men in what seem to me impressive basketball shoes stand with Styrofoam cups asking for money outside coffee shops. A woman from a nearby halfway house has been asking me for "any change" for roughly five years now. Had I given her a half a buck every time she asked, the sum today would probably be in the thousands.

Apart from buying a monthly copy of *Streetwise*, I tend not to cough up. If I did, it would cost me five or six dollars every time I left my apartment. Occasionally, I will yield to a clever approach. "Excuse me," a guy one day asked me, "but are you an architect?" "No," I answered, "but why do you think I might be?" "I dunno," he said, "something about your tie. Got any change?" "For you, yes," I said, forking over a buck. Another time, while I was loading groceries into my car on a sunny afternoon, a very fit young man came up to me and, with a scowl, announced: "I'm just out of prison and I need any help you can give me." Something impressively menacing in that approach. What was he in prison for? I barely had time to wonder. Possibly for punching out someone who refused an earlier appeal for a handout. I forked over another buck.

I regret and—whether or not I am entitled to do so—slightly resent beggary as a feature of my neighborhood landscape and of city-

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scapes across the country generally. One can hand out a buck here and there, largely as a balm to one's own conscience. Clearly such handouts aren't much help to the people who are doing the begging, since in my neighborhood the same people seem to be at it year after year. But with begging endemic, one is always looking the other way; it is impossible to be lighthearted; a deep stain of hopelessness seeps through all of life.

At least there is no begging on my block. Instead there is a Guatemalan clothing shop filled with items of the richest colors, a beauty shop, a florist, a Chinese restaurant, a Dyn-o-Mite Copy shop, where I have more than once made my stale joke about Xerox never having come up with anything original. Easily the most going concern on the street is a health club. From this club emerge bulked-up young men, carrying thick weight-lifting belts, and an endless stream of women, most of them young, wearing spandex tights, their hair pulled back in ponytails, their faces flushed with exercise. A few doors down, the health club occupies a storefront, where, during the mornings, it offers a baby-sitting service; sometimes, when one passes, children are frisking in the window, rather like puppies in a pet shop. At other times the shop is used for instruction in karate, tai chi, and aerobics. Self-improvement is the theme of the health club, defiance of aging its larger meaning.

The block is dominated by the Northshore Retirement Hotel, whose clientele, along with being aged, seems preponderantly Jewish. Living so near such an institution provides more than a few intimations of mortality. On some mornings, upon waking, shuffling into the kitchen to get the coffee going, in the dark I see red lights blinking along my hall walls. The red lights are from a fire department's emergency vehicle, come to the Northshore to resuscitate—or to carry off—an older man or woman whose heart, lungs, or other major organ hasn't made it through the night. At the Northshore Retirement Hotel, any time is check-out time. A funny way to start the day, on a note of catastrophe for someone else.

Along with the fire department vehicles, there are ambulettes and other four-wheeled carriers of ill tidings that pull up before the Northshore Retirement Hotel. Sons and daughters, themselves no longer so young, often arrive to pick up an elderly parent for a holiday dinner or a Sunday outing. I do not go so far as Dorothy Parker, who, bemoaning her middle age, said: "People ought to be one of two things, young or dead." But, living near the aged, I more and more incline to the notion that the phrase "a happy old age" might just be an oxymoron.

A man of cheerful countenance makes his way around the block every morning, no matter how harsh the weather, with the aid of a walker. Many women regulars are out on rounds of errands, not letting osteoporosis or other of the depredations of old age blow them off the court—not yet anyway.

For a number of years, a small man, bald, neatly turned out, never without a tie and jacket or shoe shine, used to walk the neighborhood streets with quiet but impressive dignity. Once I sat across from him at a restaurant where he was having breakfast with a nephew and niece. The niece addressed him as Uncle Hy. My guess is that they were his only surviving family. Was he a bachelor—something about his appearance suggests he may have been a bachelor of the meticulous type—or a widower? What was his line of work earlier in his life? I have shifted into the past tense because I haven't seen him for a few months. Could it be that one of those fire department trucks that sometimes greets me upon waking was for him? If so, I hope his death, like his clothes, was tidy. He was a neighborhood guy, and, though we never spoke, I miss him.

As a neighborhood guy myself, I wonder where—and how—I'll end up. I hope decent health allows me to close out my book with dignity; I hope my spirit allows me to depart with courage. ("Courage is no good: / It means not scaring others," wrote Philip Larkin of death.) I hope I can avoid dying out of town, or even downtown. Ideally, I should prefer pegging out in the neighborhood in which I now live, and I should like to discover that the afterlife includes the best of the neighborhoods of my boyhood. I'd awake to find myself seated at Friedman's, a corned beef on rye, mustard, set before me as well as a side order of potato salad and a Pepsi-Cola. Old friends would be there. We'd talk about the great Chicago Bear teams of the past. We'd lie amusingly about our success in all realms of life. Wild laughter along with cigarette smoke would float to the ceiling. God, it would be heavenly.

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Bourgeois Virtue

DONALD McCLOSKEY

WE HAVE TWO WAYS of talking about the virtues, and we seem stuck on them. One way is patrician, which concerns what John Casey calls "pagan" virtues. The four classical pagan virtues are those of Odysseus: prudence, temperance, justice, and courage. The aristocrat is honorable, great-hearted in hospitality, quick to anger. "You wine sack, with a dog's eyes, with a deer's heart," says Achilles—exhibiting more courage than prudence, temperance, or justice—"Never / once have you taken courage in your heart to arm with your people."

The other way of virtue-talk is plebeian, the way of St. Paul. The peasant suffers yet endures. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God. . . . Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." Faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest is charity. It is a "slave morality," bending to the aristocratic virtues that Nietzsche and other Hellenizers prized.

The two vocabularies of the virtues are spoken in the camp and common. Achilles struts through the camp in his Hephaestian armor, exercising a noble wrath. Jesus stands barefoot on the Mount, preaching to the least of the commoners.

And yet we live mostly now in the town, we bourgeois, or else we are moving to townly occupations as fast as we can manage, trading the old cow for a car. The aristocracy is gone, though some intellectuals wish not. And the prediction that the proletariat at the other end would become the universal class has proven to be mistaken.

Jobs for the two older classes are disappearing. Half of the employment in rich countries is white-collar, and the percentage is rising. The very soldiers in capitalist democracies are shufflers of paper. The production of things has become steadily cheaper. A barber or a professor was not much more productive in 1990 than in 1800, or, for that matter, in 400 B.C. It still takes fifteen minutes with a pair of

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scissors to do a short back and sides and fifty minutes with a piece of chalk to convey the notion of comparative advantage. But the farmer since 1800 has become more productive in the United States by a factor of 36. We cannot eat 36 times more food, though some of us try, and so the farmer's share in employment has fallen towards nil. A piece of cotton cloth that sold for 40 shillings in the 1780s sold for 5 shillings in the 1850s, and nowadays, using the same values of money, for a few pence. The cheapness led spinning out of the home, then weaving, canning, the making of men's and women's clothing, and food preparation. Stanley Lebergott recently calculated that the time involved in food preparation during the years from 1900 to 1965 fell from 44 hours a week to 10. Calculating power itself—adding, multiplying, and carrying—that sold for $400 in 1970 sold for $4 in 1990. Workers on the American manufacturing line peaked at about a fifth of the total labor force after World War II and the percentage has been falling ever since, although only slowly at first. Fifty years from now a maker of things on an assembly line will be as rare as a farmer. The only jobs left will be hamburger flipping on the one side and bourgeois occupations on the other.

It is usual to praise a pagan or a Christian virtue and then to complain how much we moderns lack it. Shamefully we bourgeois are neither saints nor heroes. The age is one of mere iron—or aluminum, or plastic—not pagan gold or Christian silver. The townsfolk are useful, maybe necessary, but not *virtuous.* "Why, the very idea! Bourgeois *virtue?*" The bourgeois virtues have been reduced to the single vice of greed.

The intelligentsia thunders at the middle class but offers no advice on how to be good within it. The only way to become a good bourgeois, according to Flaubert and Sinclair Lewis and Paolo Pasolini, is to stop being one. Not having an ideal of bourgeois virtue, or devaluing the ideal by comparison with Christian and aristocratic virtue, leaves us unable to talk about virtue at all. We bourgeois are left without reasons for ethical standards. We are left with What's Profitable: "Yet a great deal of money is made here. Good day, sir."

Ethics courses in business and medical schools exhibit the dilemma. Some time ago the Harvard Business School was given $20 million to study ethics in the old way—all the ethics that money could buy. Harvard Medical School has waxed ethical, too. The professors staffing the courses believe that ethical questions are matters of crisis. What are the ethics of insider trading? Would Jesus have signed on? What about the transplantation of organs? How would Kant have felt about that one? Yet neither aristocratic nor peasant virtue can offer much minute-by-minute help in how to be a good bourgeois.

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Ethics has turned recently from universal theories to the particular virtues, as in Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, or John Casey's *Pagan Virtue: An Essay in Ethics*. It has also turned to narratives in aid of the virtues—for example, Albert Jonsen and Stephen Toulmin's *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* or Wayne Booth's *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction*. Feminist thinking on the matter, such as that found in Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*, or Nel Noddings's *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, has questioned the presumption of universal ethics, in particular the worship of masculine virtues. As Bernard Williams puts it, in the new approach—as new as Aristotle—"morality is seen as something whose real existence must consist in personal experience and social institutions, not in sets of propositions." It is local knowledge, not universal, located in the camp or common or town.

Consider the virtues of the three classes, matched to their character. The "character" might be in the eyes of others, or in its own eyes, or, less commonly, in fact.

The Classes and the Virtues

Aristocrat Patrician	Peasant Plebeian	Bourgeois Mercantile
pagan	Christian	secular
Achilles	St. Francis	Benjamin Franklin
pride of being	pride of service	pride of action
honor	duty	integrity
forthrightness	candor	honesty
loyalty	solidarity	trustworthiness
courage	fortitude	enterprise
wit	jocularity	humor
courtesy	reverence	respect
propriety	humility	modesty
magnanimity	benevolence	consideration
justice	fairness	responsibility
foresight	wisdom	prudence
moderation	frugality	thrift
love	charity	affection
grace	dignity	self-possession
subjective	objective	conjective

The point is not to elevate bourgeois virtue over the others in some

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universal sense. The point is to sidestep universal senses. In some personal and social circumstances, courage is a virtue. (In others, it is a vice.) So is humility. (Likewise.) But when the class left out by the virtue-talk is half the population, on its way to being all the population, the vocabulary of the virtues is not doing its job. As Richard Rorty puts it, "detailed descriptions of particular varieties of pain and humiliation (in, e.g., novels and ethnographies), rather than philosophical or religious treatises, were the modern intellectual's principal contributions to moral progress." Chinua Achebè's *Things Fall Apart* or the writings of Borges inspire me to act ethically toward Nigerians or Argentineans more than does any amount of philosophizing about universal good. A modern society needs poetry and history and movies about bourgeois virtue: integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, enterprise, humor, respect, modesty, consideration, responsibility, prudence, thrift, affection, self-possession.

So far society has gotten poetry and history and movies about the older virtues, looking back on many-tower'd Camelot and sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain. The result has been mostly bad, as in the nationalist wars down to 1914 and the ideological wars that followed.

Hellenism, for example, made war into a contest of aristocratic virtues, Hector and Achilles armed with cordite and barbed wire. In his autobiography of 1928, the German classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff speaks fondly of a Scottish colleague, who "was a gentleman in the full sense of the word. . . . [He was] proud of his great nation and of the British Empire, as was proper, but also as a true patriot ready to give free play to the patriotism and pride of another. United in this frame of mind as good friends," he continues, dreaming of Ilium and immortal fame, "we sent our sons to meet each other in the field." Wilamowitz's son Tycho attained in the trenches of the Great War "an early death on the field of honour," honorably gassed, perhaps, or suffocated in his bunker, or run over by a truck.

Romantic Teutonism, on the other hand, invented a primitive community of equals exhibiting the peasant virtues. The theory is still credited by non-historians. Prince Kropotkin, writing to the Russians in 1901 from the safety of a bourgeois nation, declared that communism would be "nearer to the folkmote self-government than representative government can ever be," and promised that "owing to the immense productivity of human labor which has been reached nowadays [and how reached, my dear Prince?] . . . a very high degree of well-being can easily be obtained in a few years by communist work." Ah yes, a few years of communist work.

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We are all bourgeois now (for some decades about 80 percent of Americans have identified themselves as "middle class," a consciousness that may of course be false). The ideals of nationalism or socialism do not suit our lives. Those of townspeople, the bourgeoisie, do.

I am suggesting, in other words, that we stop sneering at the bourgeoisie, stop being ashamed of being middle class, and stop defining a participant in an economy as an amoral brute. The bad talk creates a reality. Adam Smith knew that a capitalist society such as eighteenth-century Edinburgh could not flourish without the virtues of trustworthiness or bourgeois pride, supported by talk. Smith's other book, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* which scarcely any economist reads, was about love, not greed; esteem, not venality. Yet even many economists have learned by now that moral sentiment must ground a market. (Some go on trying to solve the Hobbes Problem, well into its fourth century of irresolution—namely: Can a mob of unsocialized brutes be proven on a blackboard to create in the end a civil society? The problem lacks point if people are already French or American.)

The growth of the market, I would argue, promotes virtue, not vice. Most intellectuals since 1848 have thought the opposite: that it erodes virtue. "It was a fundamental principle of the Gradgrind philosophy that everything was to be paid for. . . . Gratitude was to be abolished, and the virtues springing from it were not to be. Every inch of the existence of mankind, from birth to death, was to be a bargain across a counter." As James Boyd White puts it in his otherwise admirable *Justice As Translation,* bourgeois growth is bad because it is "the expansion of the exchange system by the conversion of what is outside it into its terms. It is a kind of steam shovel chewing away at the natural and social world."

And yet we all take happily what the market gives—polite, accommodating, energetic, enterprising, risk-taking, trustworthy people; not bad people. In the Bulgaria of old (I am informed by Poles who claimed to have seen it), the department stores had a policeman on every floor, not to prevent theft but to stop the customers from attacking the arrogant and incompetent clerks selling goods that fell apart at the moment of sale. The way a salesperson in an American store greets customers startles foreigners: "How can I help you?" It is an instance in miniature of bourgeois virtue.

Even an ethics of greed for the almighty dollar, to take the caricature at its face value, is not the worst. For example, an ethics of greed is better than an ethics of slaughter, whether by patrician sword or plebeian pike. Commercial greed must work by mutual agreement, not by violence. "There are few ways in which a man can be more

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innocently employed than in getting money," said Dr. Johnson. The disdain for modest greed is ethically naïve, because it fails to acknowledge that the greed prospers in a market economy only by satisfying the customer.

Donald Trump offends. But for all the envy he has provoked, he is not a thief. He didn't get his millions from aristocratic cattle raids, acclaimed in bardic glory. He made, as he put it in his first book, deals. The deals were voluntary. He didn't use a .38 or a broadsword to get people to agree. He bought the Commodore Hotel low and sold it high because Penn Central, Hyatt Hotels, and the New York City Board of Estimate—and behind them the voters and hotel guests—put the old place at a low value and the new place, trumped up, at a high value. Trump earned a suitably fat profit for seeing that a hotel in a low-value use could be moved into a high-value use. An omniscient central planner would have ordered the same move. Market capitalism should be defended as the most altruistic of systems, each capitalist working, working, working to help a customer, for pay. Trump does good by doing well.

And even from a strictly individual view, the bourgeois virtues, though not those of Achilles or Jesus, are not ethical zeros. Albert Hirschman (who speaks precisely of "bourgeois virtues") recounts the career from Montesquieu to Marx of the phrase "doux commerce," quoting for instance William Robertson in 1769: that sweet commerce "tends to wear off those prejudices which maintain distinctions and animosity between nations. It softens and polishes the manners of men." In his play at the dawn of bourgeois power, George Lillo has his ideal of the London merchant, Thorowgood, assert that "as the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him." Thorowgood on leaving the office instructs his assistant to "look carefully over the files to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid." The aristocrat can sneer at the goody-goodness of the bourgeois; but after all, in seriousness, is it not a matter of virtue to pay one's tailor? What kind of person accepts the wares of tradesmen and refuses to give something in return, though promised? No merchant he.

The honesty of a society of merchants goes beyond what would be strictly self-interested in a society of rats, as in that much maligned model of the mercantile society, the small midwestern city. A reputation for fair dealing is necessary for a roofer whose trade is limited to a town with a population of fifty thousand. One bad roof and he is finished in Iowa City, and so he practices virtue with care. By now he would not put on a bad roof even if he could get away with it, and he behaves like a growing child internalizing virtues once forced on him.

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A woman at a cocktail party who told the story of her bad roof (redone for free, at the roofer's instigation) refused to tell his name. A rat would have ruined the businessman to improve the story. After all, the woman's own reputation wasn't at stake.

A potent source of bourgeois virtue and a check on bourgeois vice is the premium that a bourgeois society puts on discourse. The bourgeois must talk. The aristocrat gives a speech, the peasant tells a tale. But the bourgeois must in the bulk of his transactions talk to an equal. It is wrong to imagine, as modern economics does, that the market is a field of silence. "I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following. . . . What news on the Rialto?"

For one thing, talk defines business reputation, as at the Iowa City cocktail party. A market economy looks forward and therefore depends on trust. The persuasive talk that establishes trust is necessary for doing much business, and that is why co-religionists or co-ethnics deal so profitably with each other. Avner Greif has explored the business dealings of Mediterranean Jews in the Middle Ages, accumulating evidence for a reputational conversation. In 1055 one Abun ben Zedaka of Jerusalem, for example, "was accused (though not charged in court) of embezzling the money of a Maghribi trader. When word of this accusation reached other Maghribi traders, merchants as far away as Sicily canceled their agency relations with him." Reputational gossip, Greif notes, was cheap, "a by-product of the commercial activity [itself] and passed along with other commercial correspondence." A letter from Palermo to an Alexandrian merchant who had disappointed the writer said, "Had I listened to what people say, I never would have entered into a partnership with you." With such information, cheating was profitless within the community.

Old Believers in Russia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries held a similar position, as Alexander Gerschenkron once pointed out. The Old Believers refused to adopt the late-seventeenth-century reforms in the Russian church, and were in other ways far from progressive. Yet because of their peculiarity they were able to establish a speech community within the larger society. Old Believers on the northern River Vyg, for example, were able in the early eighteenth century to become major grain merchants to the new St. Petersburg "by utilizing their connections with the other Old Believers' communities in the southern parts of the country." Sir William Petty observed at the time that "trade is not fixed to any species of religion as such, but rather to the heterodox part of the whole." Any distinction will do. Quakers were great merchants in eighteenth-century England. The overseas Chinese, segregated from the rest of the population (and therefore able to talk inexpensively with one another

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about breaches of contract among their own), are more successful in trade than their cousins at home.

The aristocrat does not deign to bargain. Hector tries, and Achilles answers: "Argue me no agreements. I cannot forgive you. / As there are no trustworthy oaths between men and lions, / Nor wolves and lambs have spirit that can be brought into agreement." The Duke of Ferrara speaks of his last, late duchess there upon the wall, "Even had you skill / In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will / Quite clear to such an one. . . . / —E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose / Never to stoop." The aristocrat never stoops; the peasant stoops silently to harvest the grain or to run the machine; the bourgeois stoops metaphorically to make his will quite clear, and to know the will and reason of the other. The aristocrat's speech is declamation, and his proofs are like commands, which is perhaps why Plato the aristocrat and some Western intellectuals after him loved them so. The proof of the irrationality of the square root of 2 convinces (*vincere*, to conquer). The bourgeois by contrast must persuade, sweetly (*suadeo*, from the same root as English *sweet*).

The bourgeois goes at persuasion with a will. About a quarter of national income is earned from merely bourgeois and feminine persuasion: not orders or information but persuasion. One thinks immediately of advertising, but in fact advertising is a tiny part of the total—1.5 percent of national income. Take instead the detailed categories of work and make a guess as to the percentage of the time in each job spent on persuasion. Out of the 115 million civilian workers it seems reasonable to assign 100 percent of the time of the 760,000 lawyers and judges to persuasion; and likewise all the public relations specialists and actors and directors. Perhaps 75 percent of the time of the 14.2 million executive, administrative, and managerial employees is spent on persuasion, and a similar share of the time of the 4.8 million teachers and the 11.2 million salespeople (excluding cashiers). Half of the effort of police, writers, and health workers, one might guess, is spent on persuasion. And so forth. The result is 28.2 million person-years, a quarter of the labor force, persuading.

The result can be checked against other measures. John Wallis and Douglass North measure 50 percent of national income as transaction costs, the costs of persuasion being part of these. Not all of the half of American workers who are white-collar talk for a living, but in an extended sense many do, and for that matter, so do many blue-collar workers, persuading each other to handle the cargo just so, and pink-collar workers dealing all day with talking customers and cooks. Of the talkers a good percentage are persuaders. The secretary shepherding a document through the company bureaucracy is called on

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to exercise sweet talk and veiled threats. The bureaucrats and professionals who constitute most of the white-collar workforce are not themselves merchants, but they do a merchant's business inside and outside their companies.

Note the persuasion exercised the next time you buy a suit. Specialty clothing stores charge more than discount stores not staffed with rhetoricians. The differential pays for the persuasion: "It's you, my dear" or "The fish tie makes a statement." As Adam Smith said in his lectures on jurisprudence, "everyone is practising oratory . . . [and therefore] they acquire a certain dexterity and address in managing their affairs, or in other words in managing of men; and this is altogether the practise of every man in most ordinary affairs . . . , the constant employment or trade of every man." Not constant, perhaps, but in Smith's time a substantial percentage and in modern times fully 25 percent.

Is the persuasive talk of the bourgeoisie then "empty," mere comforting chatter with no further economic significance? It can't be. If that was all it was, the economy would be engaging in an expensive activity to no purpose. By shutting up we could pick up a $20 bill (or more exactly a $1,500,000,000,000 bill). A quarter of national income is a lot to pay for economically functionless warm and fuzzies. The fact would not square with the most modest claims of economics. The businesspeople circling La Guardia on a rainy Monday night could have stayed home. The crisis meeting in the plant cafeteria between the managers and the workers would lack point.

Adam Smith, as usual, put the matter well. The division of labor is the "consequence of a certain propensity . . . to truck, barter, and exchange . . . [I cannot pause here to consider] whether this propensity be one of those original principles in human nature, of which no further account can be given; or whether, as seems more probable, it be the necessary consequence of the faculties of reason *and speech.*" *The Wealth of Nations* did not again mention the faculty of speech in a foundational role, though Smith, who began his career as teacher of rhetoric, did remark frequently on how businesspeople and politicians talked together. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* he called speech "the characteristic faculty of human nature."

Half of Smith's formula, the faculty of reason, became in time the characteristic obsession of economists. Smith himself did not much pursue it. Economic Man, rationally seeking, is not a Smithian character. It was later economists, especially Paul Samuelson during the 1940s, who reduced economics to the reasoning of a constrained maximizer, Seeking Man, *Homo petens.* Samuelson's seeking has a peasant cast to it: the maximization of known utility under known

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constraints sounds more like Piers Plowman than Robinson Crusoe. The utilitarian reduction of all the virtues to one maximand makes all virtues into prudence. The windup mice of modern economic theory know nothing of humor, affection, integrity, and self-possession. Smith's notion of *Homo loquans*, Speaking Man, squares better with the varied virtues of the bourgeoisie.

The high share of persuasion provides a scene for bourgeois virtue. One must establish a relationship of trust with someone in order to persuade him. *Ethos*, the character that a speaker claims, is the master argument. So the world of the bourgeoisie is jammed with institutions for making relationships and declaring character, from credit bureaus to business schools. The aristocracy and the peasantry got their characters ready-made by status, and, in any case, they did not need to persuade. Thomas Buddenbrook bitterly scolds his unbusinesslike brother, a harbinger of bohemianism in the family: "In a company consisting of business as well as professional men, you make the remark, for everyone to hear, that, when one really considers it, every businessman is a swindler—you, a businessman yourself, belonging to a firm that strains every nerve and muscle to preserve its perfect integrity and spotless reputation."

The bourgeoisie works with its mouth, and it depends on word of mouth. Tom Buddenbrook, in the 1850s, thinks of his grandfather who during the Napoleonic Wars made the family's fortune out of talk: "He drove in a four-horse coach to Southern Germany, as commissary to the Prussian army—an old man in pumps, with his head powdered. And there he played his charms and his talents and made an astonishing amount of money." Tom himself most enjoys "trade he came by through his own personal efforts. Sometimes, entirely by accident, perhaps on a walk with the family, he would go into a mill for a chat with the miller, who would feel himself much honoured by the visit; and quite *en passant*, in the best of moods, he could conclude a good bargain." At the crisis of 1848, the Assembly in the novel is trapped by a mob in the town hall. "The natural instinct towards industry, common to all these good burghers, began to assert itself: they ventured to bargain a little, to pick up a little business here and there." Charming the generals, chatting with the miller, picking up a little business here and there. What news on the Rialto?

On the other hand, idle talk is not bourgeois. Idle, artistic, romantic talk is a habit of the bohemians sprung from the bourgeoisie, adumbrated in Christian Buddenbrook, of whom Tom the bourgeois says, "There is such a lack of modesty in so much communicativeness. . . . Control, equilibrium, is, at least for me, the important thing. There will always be men who are justified in this interest in them-

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selves, this detailed observation of their own emotions, . . . poets," or novelists, like the Mann brothers, Thomas and Heinrich.

Now of course the sweet talk among the bourgeoisie can be parodied, and it has been since 1848 to the point of tedium. In *Buddenbrooks*: "Everybody puts his best foot forward before strangers. We all take care to say what will be pleasant to hear." The intellectuals sneer at the vulgarity of business talk ("Run it up the flagpole and see if anyone salutes"), "the clumsy but comfortable idioms which seemed to embody to [the burghers] the business efficiency and the easy well-being of their community."

Bourgeois friendship is false in aristocratic or peasant terms. Tom's father recalls his own business experiments as a young man: "My journey to England had for its chief purpose to look out for connections there for my undertakings. To this end I went as far as Scotland, and made many valuable acquaintances." These acquaintances of which one hears so much in a bourgeois society are hardly friends on the aristocratic model of Achilles and Patroclus. The acquaintances could turn, exhibiting "all the sudden coldness, the reserve, the mistrust at the banks, with 'friends,' and among firms abroad which such an event, such a weakening of working capital, was sure to bring in its train." Yet even such acquaintanceship—even if not Aristotle's notion of true friendship—is a virtue.

The virtues of the bourgeois are those necessary for town life, for commerce and self-government. The virtue of tolerance, for example, can be viewed as bourgeois. Its correlations in European history, such as between Spain and Holland, suggest so. The experience of uncertainty in trading creates a skepticism about certitude—the arrogant and theoretical certitude of the aristocrat or the humble and routine certitude of the peasant. As Arjo Klamer has pointed out, "the dogma of doubt" is bourgeois, an attitude suited to the vagaries of the marketplace.

Bourgeois charity, again, if not the "charity," meaning love, of the English bibles, runs contrary to the caricature of greed. More than the peasant or aristocrat, the bourgeois gives to the poor—as in the ghettos of Eastern Europe or in the small towns of America. Acts of charity follow the bourgeois norm of reciprocity. The American Gospel of Wealth, founding hospitals, colleges, and libraries wherever little fortunes were made, is a bourgeois notion, paying back what was taken in profit. Walter Annenberg gives $500 million to schools in one jolt and we are not astonished. Middle-class people in the nineteenth century habitually gave a biblical tenth of their incomes to charity. The intrusion of the state into charity killed the impulse, remaking charity into a *taille* imposed on grumbling peasants: I gave at the office.

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And yet the intelligentsia detests this splendid bourgeoisie. The detestation is not new. Anciently the poet prefers his Sabine valley to troublesome riches, even while accepting large gifts in cash or land from Maecenas and Augustus. The disdain for moneygrubbing has always been a literary theme, and it merged smoothly into Christian virtue. But over the past century and a half, hostility to the moneygrubbing class has become frantic. After a brief flirtation with probourgeois attitudes in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—Daniel Defoe's heroes are not aristocrats; Voltaire admired the English bourgeois virtues; Jane Austen, late, admired at least the marriage market—literature sinks into a sustained sneer. The novel begins as the epic of the bourgeoisie but becomes with Balzac and Dickens an anti-epic, a *Dunciad* of the middle classes. German romantics and French statists and English evangelicals in the early nineteenth century were bourgeois by origin, but did not like it, not one bit.

As Shaw observed in 1912:

> The first half of the XIX century considered itself the greatest of all centuries. The second discovered that it was the wickedest of all centuries. The first half despised and pitied the Middle Ages. . . . The second half saw no hope for mankind except in the recovery of the faith, the art, the humanity of the Middle Ages. . . . For that was how men felt, and how some of them spoke, in the early days of the Great Conversion, which produced, first, such books as the *Latter Day Pamphlets* of Carlyle, Dickens' *Hard Times*, . . . and later on the Socialist movement . . . which has succeeded in convincing even those who most abhor the name of Socialism that the condition of the civilized world is deplorable.

The Great Conversion took decades to spread beyond a handful of avant-garde clerks. Meanwhile popular literature from the Horatio Alger stories to Dale Carnegie and the *Reader's Digest* continued to reflect on bourgeois virtues. And yet the clerks won in the end. High culture does.

The treason of the clerks since the middle of the nineteenth century has been a treason against their fathers, who were uniformly bourgeois. Overwhelmingly the French men of letters who barked at the bourgeoisie were the sons of lawyers and mill owners. So too were German men of letters, for instance, Marx and Engels. The American progressives, advocating a secularized but nonetheless Christian ideal for public policy, were the sons and daughters of Protestant ministers, bourgeois all.

It is a puzzle. In his astonishing *Bohemian versus Bourgeois: French Society and the French Man of Letters in the Nineteenth Century*, published in 1964, César Graña asked, "What is it in the spiritual scene of modern society that may account for such intellectual touchiness, willfulness, and bitterness" among the intelligentsia against the bour-

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geoisie? His answer was what has since been called the "aporia of the Enlightenment project"—namely, the conflict between freedom and rationalism in modern life. The bourgeoisie is seen by intellectuals such as Dickens, Weber, and Freud as the embodiment of rationality.

Graña was probably correct. Impatience with calculation is the mark of romance, especially in parody. Don Quixote's idiocies in aid of chivalry are uncalculated but noble. Mr. Gradgrind becomes a Member of Parliament, "one of the respected members for ounce weights and measures, one of the representatives of the multiplication table, one of the deaf honorable gentlemen, . . . one of the dead honorable gentlemen, to every other consideration."

But the intellectuals were mistaken about the growth of rationality. They mistook bourgeois life, the way a rebellious son mistakes the life of his father. The life of the bourgeoisie is not routine but creative. What has raised income per head in the rich countries by a factor of twelve since the eighteenth century is originality backed by commercial courage, not science. Dickens was mistaken to think that Facts alone are wanted in the life of manufacturing. Manufacturing depends on enterprise and single-mindedness, far from the coolly rational. Weber was mistaken to think that the modern state embodies principles of rationality in bureaucracy. Anyone who thinks that a large modern bureaucracy runs "like an army" cannot have experienced either a large modern bureaucracy or an army. Freud was mistaken to claim that modern life compels a choice between the reality principle and eroticism. A businessperson without an erotic drive, suitably sublimated, achieves nothing.

The lack of insight by the intelligentsia into business life is odd. It reminds one, I repeat, of an adolescent boy sneering at his father: remarkable how the old chap matured between my seventeenth and twenty-first birthdays. The European novel contains hardly a single rounded and accurate portrait of a businessman (Thomas Buddenbrook is a notable exception). The businessman is almost always a cardboard fool, unless he proves in the end to evince aristocratic or Christian virtues. Intellectuals in the West have had a tin ear for business and its values. Thus Arthur Hugh Clough in 1862 said in "The Latest Decalogue": "Thou shalt have one God only; who / Would be at the expense of two?" and so on in the vein of a clever lad sneering at the commercial success that put him through Rugby School in Oxford (Clough's father was a cotton merchant), down to "Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat, / When it's so lucrative to cheat. / . . . Thou shalt not covet, but tradition / Approves all forms of competition."

Economics, as the science of business, has been similarly spurned,

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leading to more adolescent sneering at what the lad does not quite grasp. (Lad, not lass: portraits of bourgeois women in literature are numerous and accurate; it is bourgeois men on the job whom novelists, male or female, have failed to grasp.) Early in the nineteenth century such writers as Macaulay or Manzoni read and understood economics and applied it intelligently. Manzoni's novel *The Betrothed* (whose last edition was 1840) contains an entire chapter on the unhappy effects of imposing price controls during a famine. But later the intellectuals construed economics as the faculty of Reason, arrayed against the Freedom they loved, a misunderstanding encouraged by the chatter about "iron laws" among classical economists. Or else they portrayed businesspeople as con men (thus Twain and Howells).

By the late nineteenth century economics had dropped out of the conversation entirely. No intellectual since 1890 has been ashamed to be ignorant about the economy or economics. Lawyers and physicists sound off about economics without having cracked a book. Historians study Marx as though he were not a minor Ricardian. Biologists passionate about economic ecology could not pass the first hour exam in Econ. 101. It is a rare English professor—David Lodge, for example, in *Nice Work*—who can see the businessperson as anything other than The Other, or The Enemy.

It is supposed not to be relevant that the intellectuals who are nostalgic for aristocratic or peasant virtues do not know what they are talking about, whether it is the bourgeois work they spurn or the manual labor they deplore. Marx never visited a factory. The longshoreman and writer Eric Hoffer, who was in a position to have opinions on the matter, once observed that Marx, the son of a lawyer and a grandson and nephew of rabbis, "never did a day's work in his life, and knew as much about the proletariat as I do about chorus girls."

A change is overdue. To admire the bourgeois virtues is not to buy into admiration for selfishness. Capitalism needs encouragement—it being the hope for the poor of the world and being in any case what we have. But capitalism need not be hedonistic or monadic and certainly not unethical. An aristocratic, country-club capitalism, well satisfied with itself, or a peasant, grasping capitalism, hating itself, are both lacking in virtue. And neither works in town. They lead to monopoly and economic failure, alienation and revolution. We need a capitalism that nurtures communities of good townsfolk, in South Central Los Angeles as much as in Iowa City. We encourage it by talking seriously about the bourgeois virtues.

One can think of people and countries to stand as models. Benjamin Franklin and America lead the pack. Graña recounts the venom

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against Franklin in the writings of D. H. Lawrence, Stendhal, and Baudelaire: "a knave in Franklin's style," writes Baudelaire, was part of "the rising bourgeoisie come to replace the faltering aristocracy," which otherwise a new aristocracy of intellectuals would resupply. It is natural to think of millionaires in imagining an ideal bourgeois, Henry Ford, for example, or Sam Walton of Walmart. But it is not necessary: Macaulay, Whitman, Lincoln, Twain, Frost, Orwell were bourgeois and in their best moods unashamed of it. Being ashamed of being bourgeois has for a long time amounted to being ashamed of America. Scratch a pro-American and you find a pro-bourgeois. The sneerers at Franklin, such as Baudelaire and Lawrence, were anti-democrats and anti-Americans. Dickens came to detest the United States as much as he came to detest businessmen.

A myth of recency has made the virtues arising from towns seem those of a shameful parvenu, such as Franklin and America. In economic history dependent on Marx, such as Max Weber's *General Economic History* or Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*, the market is seen as a novelty. "Market economy," claimed Polanyi with little evidence, "is an institutional structure which, as we all too easily forget, has been present at no time except our own." From this Marxist historical mistake arose the fairy tales of lost paradises for aristocrats or peasants and a reason for ignoring the bourgeois virtues.

It has taken a century of professional history to correct the mistake. The late David Herlihy put it this way in 1971: "Research has all but wiped from the ledgers the supposed gulf once considered fundamental, between a medieval manorial economy and the capitalism of the modern period." Medieval men bought and sold everything from grain to bishoprics. The Vikings were traders, too. Greece and Rome were business empires. The city of Jericho dates to 8000 B.C. The emerging truth is that we have lived in a world market for centuries, a market run by the bourgeoisie. Time to recognize the fact and to cultivate a bourgeois virtue.

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With the Sun Rising

RICHARD DANKLEFF

The mate yells—they're seldom so near.
Ahead of our bow these acrobats—they leap
clear out of the water!—are paving our progress
with sun-spangled arcs, like devotees
strewing flowers for prophets. They give
our everyday Atlantic a reach of something
part carrousel and part church choir . . .
gilt ponies plunging, the choir astride
hymning hallelujahs.

Dolphins,
the mate claims, are smarter than his deck gang
and can swim at twenty knots. Dolphins,
somebody said, like us for no reason at all
or for a human grace invisible to us. And we,
I'd say, like them for that inscrutable acceptance
and wish we could make out a holy warp
behind their fancy woof. Now we stare
as if these stunts are just to entertain
a few enchanted seamen.

They don't need
to leap so high to breathe:
these six- and seven-foot updivers hover
above the dazzled water. Beside us,
briefly closer, they cavort
so gloriously beyond our scope
that my scalp prickles—and Alabama,
just come on deck, blinking
and hungover, intones *Ga-awd da-amn!*

✪ RICHARD DANKLEFF is the author of two collections of poems, *Popcorn Girl* and *Westerns*, both from Oregon State University Press.

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The Longest Night

Broadcasting's First Invasion

JOHN McDONOUGH

To 155,000 SOLDIERS, D-Day came as a bad dream at dawn on a strange beach. But to 130 million Americans at home, it came to their bedsides in the dark over the radio. *Time* said those who listened "had an experience they will remember to their graves." I therefore propose to consider D-Day not as a military battle but as a "media event," one that produced the first defining triumph of modern broadcast journalism.

D-Day was made for the electronic mass medium. Five years of global warfare had come to a climactic collision of primal forces; a battle to the death between good and evil in which for a few perilous early hours the fortunes of civilization seemed to dangle by a spider's strand. It was Roosevelt's "rendezvous with destiny" fulfilled. "In years to come," said Lowell Thomas in the manner of Henry V on St. Crispin's Day, "history will tell again and again of this day, June 6, invasion day." *Broadcasting* magazine called it "the biggest story since Creation." But, alas, Creation received only print coverage. D-Day was *radio's* invasion.

Soon we will mark its fiftieth anniversary, and it comes at an interesting time. While many of us may be too young to remember radio's D-Day—only about 12 percent of Americans living today have distinct memories of that time—none of us is too far removed from the television images of the Gulf War not to remember them. The two events have remarkably similar media profiles. Consider six points: 1. If D-Day was broadcasting's *first* invasion, Desert Storm was its second. 2. Each invasion was expected. The world was braced for the news. 3. Each was preceded by a huge media buildup that gave broad-

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casters time to organize their resources and promote their coverage. 4. Once under way, each held America in a state of synchronous national tension with a continuous and mesmerizing suspense that preempted all advertising and most programming. 5. Each was marked by covert military deployment of the media for feints: on D-Day, to divert enemy eyes to the Dover Strait; and in Desert Storm, to fix them on the Persian Gulf. And, most important: 6. In each case broadcasting came out of the experience reinvented in some basic way. If D-Day certified the ascendancy of network news as we have come to know it, the Gulf War handed us the triumph of CNN and global telecommunication as the world's most potent information instrument.

"Precedents toppled like ducks," the *New York Times* said, reviewing radio's D-Day performance. There was pooling, for example. It seemed to the military both inappropriate and inefficient that the invasion should become an arena in which reporters scrambled about for scoops. So, for the first time, broadcasters were obliged to "pool" their accredited, and otherwise proprietary, correspondents into "the combined American networks," assuring that all eyewitness reports from the front, which were courtesy of the military anyway, would be available to all. The weight of the occasion was such that no network was heard to utter a syllable of protest. Another "duck" that fell was the notorious ban on transcriptions. Events pushed the networks across a critical Rubicon on this issue, and the consequences would be far-reaching.

Finally, D-Day was the first time the networks permitted a breaking news story to override virtually an entire day's commercial schedule. This may seem unremarkable today. But it hadn't always been that way. Before D-Day, news had struggled in a medium dominated by entertainment and paid for by advertisers. In 1941 the most popular radio journalist in America was an ex-vaudevillian named Walter Winchell. Even when the Japanese turned Pearl Harbor into a junkyard, the networks saw no compelling reason to bump such Sunday evening entertainments as "Manhattan Merry Go Round" or "Henry Aldrich." They merely interrupted them with brief bulletins, always with apologies to the true Caesar: "We thank the sponsor for relinquishing a portion of his time." It was not radio's finest hour. But two and a half years of war had forced a hasty maturity on network news. On D-Day it reached a critical mass and helped set a national mood of sobriety over celebration or sensationalism. "You had the feeling," wrote John K. Hutchens in the *New York Times* on June 11, "that radio, in its capacity as an informant, had grown up."

If the media profiles of D-Day and Desert Storm are similar, it's important to note that the political profiles are markedly different. The broadcast journalism of D-Day reflected a fierce sense of consen-

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sus and support. Gulf War coverage was tempered by detachment and skepticism. World War II was fought without doubts over purposes or objectives. The Gulf War was debated even as it was being fought. Network reporters on D-Day had broad access to battle fronts and information. The military trusted them, and most reporters accepted the good faith of the military censors. In the Gulf War, journalists were kept behind the lines or carefully chaperoned because they had become adversaries of the military. Censorship's mission had expanded from guarding military security to protecting policy. Many reporters resented it. They felt politics had debased good faith. All this was rooted in the contrasting political situations of the two wars and in the fact that, between these wars, Vietnam had soured the press-military partnership that lingered from World War II. These comparisons are worth keeping in mind, because they will inevitably frame any contemporary perception of D-Day as a "media event."

Transcriptions of the first thirty-six continuous hours of D-Day news broadcasts are currently in the National Archives (and are available, if one wishes, through a separate organization: Radio Yesteryear, 800-243-0987). They make remarkable listening. Here is the invasion inscribed with its original rhythms and dynamics intact, a kind of archival virtual reality. Today we know D-Day through textbooks, where it flows to closure with an ineluctable logic. But in these suspenseful transcriptions there are no guarantees. Broadcasting held the nation hostage to a terrible incertitude, and for the first time made every American a participant in one of history's rare epiphanies. The bulletins, actualities, technical glitches, and anxiety in the voices bring an urgent verisimilitude to the story that you won't find in newspapers and magazines. The press prioritized and processed events. But radio blurted out everything. Radio's D-Day was a random, shapeless mosaic in constant motion. The arc of tension zigzagged from high emotion to long, thumb-twiddling stretches. But in its messiness, it caught the uncertainties of a great battle in progress.

In 1944, broadcast journalism was still young. But it was full of smart, cultivated men who knew their Hemingway as well as their Pyle: Ed Murrow, William L. Shirer, Bob Trout, Charles Collingwood, Eric Sevareid, Richard C. Hottelet, Larry Lesueur, Bill Downs, Howard K. Smith, and Winston Burdett, all still untainted by conspiracies of psychographics, gross rating points, media consultants, and audiences with a twelve-second attention span. It is by now a tenet of media mythology that the stars fell on CBS. That was very much the contemporary view as well. When the *Atlantic Monthly* looked at network news in 1945, its conclusion did not equivocate: "The blue ribbon for overseas reporting goes to CBS."

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What did America actually hear that night and day? What didn't it hear? Five words that were never spoken on June 6 were *Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno,* and *Sword,* the now-famous code names of the invasion beaches. Even correspondents were not privy to such information. Nor was a word ever spoken about the bloody fighting on Omaha Beach—not even a suggestion. Even if military censorship had permitted it, which for obvious reasons it wouldn't have, there were no cellular phones or pocket transmitters to get the story out. In the chaos of Omaha, journalists were as cut off from their channels of communication as soldiers were from their chains of command. Listeners knew little of Hitler that day either: that his aides were too frightened to wake him in the middle of the night; or that at 4:00 P.M. at Berchtesgaden, he toasted himself with lime blossom tea and took a nap, confident that Normandy was a feint. All this was for historians to discover. On June 6, it was beyond the reach of journalism.

Most of the invasion news that Americans did hear, especially in the early hours, came from German broadcasts, and, by and large, it was accurate. Suspiciously so. At 7:17 on the morning of D-Day, Elmer Davis of the Office of War Information (OWI) saw a tactic of counter-intelligence being refitted for the media. "[They] are trying to build up a reputation for accuracy," he told the press, "so that they can put one over on the Allies later." The networks relied on the wire services, their own correspondents, and short-wave broadcasts from other countries, which they carefully monitored. In a wooden shack just off Roosevelt Field twenty miles out on Long Island, the CBS shortwave "listening station" was on high alert. Phone lines linked its antennas to CBS headquarters at 485 Madison Avenue in Manhattan, where three floors above the newsroom a staff of mostly European exiles sat with headphones in eight-hour shifts feverishly translating broadcasts from Berlin, Holland, Calais, and London.

Invasion news came three ways that night. First, from the announcers in New York, who were farthest from the action. Second, the pool correspondents, who had the benefit of seeing what they reported. After flying out with a mission, they would return to base where military jeeps would drive them to the British Ministry of Information on Malet Street, where three tiny studios and a cramped work area had been hastily set up in the building's stuffy and windowless cellar. Here they passed their stories to military censors (public relations officers, or PROs) and did their broadcasts. Transatlantic telephone lines were still unreliable. So everything moved on shortwave circuits, which were sometimes none too reliable themselves. And third, a handful of correspondents managed to reach directly into the ambience of battle by recording on-the-scene reports on cumbersome wire

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or film devices provided by the military. The censors would review the recordings, then send them by shortwave to America. The delay in transmission ran approximately twenty-four hours.

Finally, there was the matter of overall tone. For reasons perhaps not considered important at the time, CBS concentrated much of its coverage on the voice of one person, Bob Trout. Today he would be called an "anchor" and make a lot of money. In 1944, neither the title nor the money had yet materialized. Trout nevertheless had become one of the network's preeminent news "announcers." He possessed not only a remarkable stamina for coherent ad-libbing but also a tone of cool elegance and restraint that would make him the matrix for the finest anchors to come. Trout's performance on D-Day remains an unmitigated masterpiece of broadcasting.

II

Between June 1941 and June 1944, the only army to oppose Germany on the Continent (outside of Italy) was that of the Soviet Union. In the worst of times, Stalin's only ally was the Russian winter. But from the day America entered the war, there was no question that Hitler would one day face a "second front" in the West. Everybody knew it. As early as 1943, when B-17s went into action over France and Germany, correspondents wondered whether their flights might be the start of what was routinely called "the big show." In 1944, harbingers of a second front mounted. In February all civilian travel between Britain and Ireland was banned. In March and April, War Department officers were in Europe quietly coordinating American network coverage. By April diplomatic travel was quarantined. No one could move to within ten miles of the Channel coast. On May 25 a "delay" impounded all American mail in England. Finally, the entire south of England was "sealed." Most of this was an open secret. Still, two questions kept the second front the biggest guessing game on earth down to the end: Where and when?

Pre-invasion publicity in America was enormous. On May 14, CBS broadcast a program—part news, part self-promotion—"describing Columbia's preparations to keep you up to the minute when our Allied armies invade France." That such programs could be done suggests the public character of the countdown. Only Desert Storm received a similar media buildup.

The next three weeks were explosively tense. As the days went by, every network news director began having the same nightmare: being off the air when the news popped. So they decided to stretch their schedules. On Friday, June 2, CBS sent a confidential Teletype to its

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143 affiliates: "Beginning tonight and until further notice we will operate our full network until 3:05 AM EWT [Eastern War Time]." This meant long hours of band remotes filling post-midnight time.

Network resources were cocked and poised to fire at a twitch. In the tenseness of the moment, it probably was inevitable that something would go wrong—and something did. On Saturday night, June 3, in London, Joan Ellis, a shy, twenty-two-year-old Teletypist with the Associated Press, inserted a strip of practice tape into what she thought was a disconnected machine. But the safety block was broken. The perforator sucked in the paper and turned its little holes into electro-mechanical impulses. At 4:38 P.M. in New York, the London-to-New York AP printers at CBS and NBC sprang to life: "Flash . . . Eisenhower's headquarters announce Allied landings France." In London, senior AP editors blinked in disbelief at the words. With no copy, no communiqué, and no confirmation from SHAEF, they felt a shiver of horror, then leaped to capture the terrible genie before it escaped. Within a minute and forty-five seconds, an emergency stop went on the wire: "Bust that flash." But it was too late. Within ninety seconds, it had slipped through a maze of checkpoints and safeguards and surged through the entire AP system. At 4:39 P.M., Eastern War Time, CBS cut into a Ted Husing broadcast from Belmont Race Track. Seconds later NBC and Mutual followed. At the Polo Grounds, a Giants-Pirates game stopped as nine thousand fans prayed. Long-distance telephone lines jammed. In Buenos Aires sirens sounded from the Nacion building. Radio seemed to halt the world in its tracks. At 4:41 CBS retracted the flash and at 5:00 P.M. Bob Trout gave a full explanation, but not before the network had received more than one thousand phone calls. The world had seen a test drill of what lay just ahead.

III

At 5:50 A.M. Central European Summer time on June 6, as the first light broke over the Channel, hundreds of naval vessels began plastering the French coast with bombardment. At 6:33 A.M. European time Berlin radio went on the air. There was "bombardment in the port of Le Havre," it announced. "The invasion has begun." Within four minutes the AP moved the Berlin bulletin on its wires.

In New York it was thirty-seven minutes into Tuesday, June 6, when five bells rang on AP Teletypes around the city. At CBS news, night editor Jesse Zousmer read the copy, gulped, and summoned newscaster Ned Calmer, who had finished his 11:00 P.M. news review an hour and a half before. The night was now set in motion toward a

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stunning moment of truth that would come at 3:32 A.M. But Zousmer was cautious this time. Waiting several minutes just in case, he called news director Paul White, who was staying at a nearby hotel. It was 12:48 A.M. in the East and 9:48 P.M. in Los Angeles, where Lennie Conn and his orchestra were feeding the network dance music from KNX. In the middle of "Forget-Me-Nots in Your Eyes," the country heard this from Calmer: "We are interrupting this program to bring you a special bulletin. A bulletin has just been received from the London office of the Associated Press which quotes the German Trans-Ocean news agency as asserting that the invasion of Western Europe has begun."

Three blocks from CBS in a brownstone on East 54th Street, Bob Trout was awakened by a phone call. "This could be it," White told him. "Better get here." He climbed out of bed, dressed in suit and tie, and took a three-minute cab ride to 485 Madison. As he got off the elevator on the seventeenth floor, White was at his desk gulping coffee trying to reverse the effect of a sleeping pill he'd taken at midnight. Major George Fielding Eliot, age fifty and the first network military consultant, was also summoned from his East 88th Street apartment. He had acquired his rank in the military intelligence reserve after World War I. By the time CBS hired him in 1939, Eliot had published three books on military policy and was one of America's best-known strategy experts.

As the first bulletins hit the air, the country began to stir. In an East Side Manhattan restaurant, the manager turned on the radio and about twenty diners stopped their conversations and listened with bowed heads. In the East and Midwest, where millions already slept under a bomber's moon, utility companies noted abrupt surges in kilowatt output as lights and radios were switched on. Lonely night-shift operators faced busy switchboards as callers told neighbors to turn on the radio. In Harlingen, Texas, where it was 11:48 P.M., staff members at KGBH began phoning listeners who had sent in post-cards asking for a wake-up call if the news broke at night. In the capital, reporters rushed to the War Department in the new Pentagon building, where Elmer Davis at the OWI had no information.

For the next two hours, with no fresh facts or verification to report, CBS broadcast brief updates at half-hour intervals beginning with Erwin Darlington's regular newscast at 1:00 A.M. Calmer went on the air at 1:30 A.M. for about five minutes. Trout took the microphone at 2:00 A.M. The Germans were reporting "landing craft and light war-ships" at the "mouth of the Somme," which after an hour turned out to be a mistranslation of *Seine*. "At the same time," reports said, "para-troops were dropped from numerous aircraft on the northern tip of

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the Normandy Peninsula" and that "the harbor of Le Havre is at the moment being bombarded. . . . The long expected Anglo-American invasion appears to have begun." At 1:56 A.M. Calais radio, which was the voice of occupied France, announced, "This is D-Day. We shall now bring music for the Allied Invasion Forces."

"It should be remembered," Trout constantly cautioned listeners, "that the Germans are quite capable of faking this entire series of reports. Their main reason for doing so, in addition to trying to smoke out Allied plans, would be to try to start a premature uprising by the resistance movements along the Channel coasts."

At 2:06 A.M., a bulletin reported that the BBC was warning residents of the Dutch coast "to evacuate inland to a distance of at least 18 miles." Why, Trout and Eliot wondered, evacuate the Dutch coast if Normandy was the target? Years later, correspondent Richard C. Hottelet identified that bulletin as one of numerous feints intended for German ears, not Dutch or American. The Allies had contrived an elaborate web of deceptions to persuade Hitler that the "real" invasion would fall at Calais. Warnings from the BBC to the Dutch and the Belgians, situated east of Calais, fed such deceptions in subtle ways. Disinformation was an old weapon, but the authority of radio gave it a new credibility.

In the wee hours of the night, the story seemed to stall. Eliot grew increasingly skeptical of the German reports, and the OWI said nothing. "Frankly," said Trout, "we don't know. However the scarcity of any details does throw very strong doubt on the possible truth of the German story." The mosaic was indistinct. DNB, the official German news agency, was going off in all directions. It reported bombing at Calais and Dunkirk, then said no Allied troops had come ashore. Both were false. At 2:35 A.M., the network signed off again with these words from Trout: "Because of high public interest in this story, I should like to take this opportunity to inform not only you, our audience, but also the staffs on duty at our affiliate stations around the country that Columbia is planning overtime operations until such time as the enemy accounts are proved false or official word from Allied sources is forthcoming."

At 3:00 A.M., CBS resumed coverage, though there still seemed little reason to take the German reports seriously. Trout recapped earlier details, adding pointedly that "the Germans are not telling this story to their own people." To kill time, Trout got up from his table in Studio 9, unlocked a small wooden cabinet, took out a portable microphone and escorted listeners on a tour of the adjoining newsroom. A staff of nearly thirty was now on duty, and the Teletypes clattered in the background. "In some ways," Trout said, thinking

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back to 1940, "the scene is not unlike those nights when the Germans were rushing through Denmark, Norway, the low countries and France."

Starting with the Reuters machine, Trout read anything that happened to be coming through. The International News Service was saying "observers on the southeast coast of England said that . . . the largest force of bombers and fighters ever seen crossing the English Channel had gone out toward the French coast." AP quoted a BBC broadcast in Dutch telling listeners to "be prepared for anything . . . *there is bombardment in the port of Le Havre.*" Trout italicized those words in a bold intonation. For the first time, an Allied source, the BBC, was confirming German reports. He came to the United Press machine. More German sources. Though he didn't know it, all the UP leads that night were being pounded out in London by a young reporter named Walter Cronkite.

By 3:15 A.M., the story began gathering detail and velocity. Eliot emphasized that the BBC report of bombardment near Le Havre was non-German. At 3:21 A.M., AP quoted more German radio: "Grand scale amphibious operations are under way, with six heavy warships and twenty destroyers at the mouth of the Seine." At 3:23 A.M., INS quoted the German military correspondent of DNB: "D-Day has dawned. . . . The second front has come." At 3:27 A.M., Ned Calmer took over the microphone briefly. "The center of gravity of the invasion is Caen," said another German report.

As Calmer spoke, an elaborate, nine-channel telephone-monitor system recently installed on Paul White's desk began ringing. From here White controlled all international circuits into the network. "Paul White's piano," staffers called it. On the line was an urgent call direct from the War Department. Stand by, a voice told him, for a special message from London over the FAX Army Signal Corps channel at precisely 3:32. Trout returned to the microphone at 3:30. He noted that all night one Teletype had been silent, the OWI wire. "It seems that the OWI is waiting cautiously before putting anything out on these German reports." An emergency alert came over the London circuit to stand by. The same alert appeared simultaneously at NBC's Rockefeller Center newsroom. Something enormous seemed about to happen. "Ladies and gentlemen," said Robert St. John at NBC, "we may be nearing a fateful hour." At ten seconds, CBS engineer Jim Sirmons signaled the studio. "And now ladies and gentlemen," said Trout, "for a special announcement we take you to Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force from London, Col. R. Ernest Dupuy."

Richard Ernest Dupuy, fifty-seven, was a distinguished-looking

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man of medium height and build who sported a neat gray mustache. Correspondents called him Ernie. He was also a noted military historian and in 1937 had co-written a widely read book called *If War Comes.* His collaborator was George Fielding Eliot. As a former commentator on NBC's "Army Hour," Dupuy's voice was familiar to listeners. Now he was senior public relations officer at SHEAF. Dupuy had wanted the text of the first communiqué to be read by a professional broadcaster. But in the maelstrom of Allied politics, the Americans didn't want a British voice and the British didn't want an American. "So to hell with it," he said. "I'll do it myself." The London circuit burst on the air in a hiss of static. Then came the dry, acidic voice of Dupuy from a studio in the Ministry of Information:

> This is Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force. The text of Communiqué Number 1 will be released to the press and radio in 10 seconds. Repeat, 10 seconds from now . . . [Dupuy held no stopwatch in his hand. He counted silently to 10, drew a breath, and began reading without emotion. History seemed to require such circumstantial pomp at a moment like this.]
>
> Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France. The Communiqué will be repeated. . . . [It was repeated.] This ends the reading of Communiqué Number 1 from Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force.

Trout's first words were solemn: "This means invasion."

IV

"The whole character of this broadcast has now changed," Trout said. The initial suspense was over. In seconds the locus of the story moved from "Is it true?" to "Are we winning?" For the next few minutes things moved quickly. "Go to London, go to London," a voice said. At 3:36 A.M. Ed Murrow had already begun reading Eisenhower's Order of the Day, the famous "You are about to embark upon the great crusade. . . ."

At 3:39 A.M., Major Eliot sketched the history of amphibious invasions. "Some have failed," he said, "but some have succeeded. . . . Usually an invasion force strikes in three waves. . . ." He was interrupted by another feed from London.

At 3:44 A.M., Americans heard their first eyewitness account from Europe. Herbert Clark had written his copy in the future conditional at least twenty-four hours before while anchored in a sealed ship at its base in England. Clark's story was held for release until after the reading of Communiqué Number 1 and read by an announcer: "When you hear this you'll know that Allied forces have leaped the

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gap," he wrote. "We'll be there and we'll be there to stay as you listen." He said nothing of his location or destination. "I don't want to be the one to tell Jerry that our sector is the one where his counterattack should go. He's going to be surprised. . . . The master race has fallen down again." Clark gave a sweeping description of the invasion armada poised at France. Some of the ships already had moved out, he said. "I am speaking to shore by the last available channel of communication and will be following those ships soon."

3:48 A.M.—For the next half hour SHAEF transmitted recorded statements to occupied Europe by exiled leaders of Norway, Holland, and Belgium. Each was carried by CBS, followed by English translation. A recorded message by Eisenhower addressed "people of Western Europe." He assured occupied countries that "the hour of liberation is approaching," but warned the underground not to jump the gun. "Wait until I give you the signal to strike the enemy." His language, which the Allies fully expected the Germans to hear and ponder, was a masterpiece of evasion. It hinted another blow might be coming and teased Wehrmacht suspicions that Normandy might be a diversion. Premier Hubert Pierlot of Belgium was even more ambiguous. He called the invasion "preliminary operations." Save your strength "for the decisive moment," he urged. "The moment of supreme combat has not yet come."

By 4:17 A.M., the first eyewitness pool report of combat came from Wright Bryan, age thirty-nine, a friendly, six-foot-five southerner who had been a friend of Margaret Mitchell in his early days at the *Atlanta Journal.* Sometime after midnight on D-Day he had boarded a C-47 full of paratroopers, witnessed the drop, then returned to London, where it was now 10:17 A.M. His fifteen-minute report was in the "I-was-there" style of good war correspondence, full of compact rhythms and whip-cracking verbs. The principal hard news came when he described his first glimpse of the French coast: "No sign of enemy aircraft over the channel."

At 4:49 A.M., NBC's James Willard picked up the story with his eyewitness report from a B-26 of landing craft approaching the beaches moments before H-Hour. Again the news was good. "I must say at once," he reported, "the amazing feature of my flight this morning was the almost unbelievable quietness of the scene below. We saw no signs of enemy resistance. I could see hundreds of planes crisscrossing below us . . . and strung out ahead and behind us like strings of sausages. Ships were moving from the coast of England in immense convoys. We crossed enemy territory at 6:18. I could see the flashes of our naval guns. There was no answering fire from coastal batteries."

It was after 2:30 A.M. on the Pacific Coast now. In Reno, Nevada,

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casinos had shut down when the news broke. The first German bulletins had reached California just after 9:30 P.M. when most people were still up. Reports were that, at 3:00 A.M., the entire city of Los Angeles "seemed awake." But as 5:00 A.M. approached in the East, most of New York slept. Trout glanced up over his mike, peered through the window in the Teletype room toward the East River, and saw the first glow of dawn over Manhattan. "It looks," he told listeners, "exactly like the morning we sat here at this very table and saw the dawn coming up as Mr. Chamberlain was telling us that the war had begun."

At 5:09 A.M., Richard C. Hottelet reported from London that he had seen twenty miles of invasion coast along Utah Beach from a Ninth Air Force Marauder. "I watched the first landing barges hit the beach exactly at the minute of H-Hour," he said. "Except for some light flack, we saw no enemy gunfire. . . . Below us the English Channel was a fine deep blue. Cruisers were firing broadsides on to the shore. Their guns belched fire and smoke. There were sheets of flame and then rolling balls of brown and black smoke. [We] were rocked by the concussion." It wasn't the way he had figured it, he said. He had expected to see German fortifications "giving back blow for blow," the Luftwaffe out in strength, anti-aircraft guns, reserve troops. But he didn't see any of it. "One thing we can say already," he said. "Our air supremacy over the invasion zone today is not seriously challenged. I return you now to the United States." More pool broadcasts followed from London. David Anderson of NBC covered an RAF tactical base and told how Allied midget submarines had put sea markers in place that guided troops in to the beaches. "The Hun has been surprised," he said.

At 5:30 A.M., after a station break, Trout was handed the first bulletin of Hitler's reaction. A Reuters dispatch quoted German sources as saying he had taken "personal command of all German anti-invasion operations" and moved his headquarters to somewhere in northern France. Simultaneously, a report on NBC added that Hitler was "at the front" with Field Marshals von Rundstedt and Rommel. All this was nonsense.

By 5:41 A.M., coverage shifted from Europe to Washington, D.C., where Bill Henry described the city at dawn: So far, no reaction from the White House, and the State Department remained dark. "Washington slept peacefully through the excitement," he reported. "The streets were dark and those whom I spoke to [shortly after midnight] didn't seem greatly excited. At my apartment house, the night clerk was asleep. On the street the doorman was very skeptical as he got me a cab. I asked the driver if he'd heard the reports. But he had a girl in the front seat and had been otherwise engaged."

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By 6:00 A.M., people in the East were learning what they'd missed in the night. Trout summarized the extraordinary sequence of events, then switched again to London for a detailed roundup by the BBC World Service. By 6:15 A.M. the sun was high over New York. Times Square had been calm all night, Trout reported. At a Bendix plant in Brooklyn, five hundred workers on the graveyard shift cheered when radios brought the news. At 4:00 A.M., a newsreel theater on Broadway began piping radio coverage through a loudspeaker to passersby on the street. No Hooper ratings measured the radio audience that night, but a few CBS people had walked the streets in the dead of night counting scattered apartments as the lights flickered on.

At 6:24 A.M., Charles Shaw of CBS reported London's reaction. The city had heard the official Allied announcement at 9:32 A.M., British Double Summer Time, and for the next hour Shaw roamed the streets looking for reaction, only to find a kind of "phlegmatic calm." Astonishingly, he said, even at that hour, few Londoners had heard the news. "You felt like shouting at these people: It's happened, the invasion," he said. Incredibly, no newspaper had published an Extra and radio sets were not yet the standard equipment in British homes that they were in American homes.

By 6:31 A.M., news had reached New York of Winston Churchill's speech to the House of Commons. Churchill's voice was never heard; no broadcasts or recordings were permitted in Commons. His remarks came as a "running story," a sentence at a time over the wires. The first bulletin quoted him as saying that "an immense Allied armada of 4,000 ships . . . have carried Allied forces across the Channel." So far, he said, "the invasion is proceeding according to plan. And what a plan!" Fresh details and specific numbers arrived in the next few minutes. He offered many solid facts, but shed no new light on the geography of battle. Broadcasters were still left with Allied generalities about "the northern coast of France." German broadcasts narrowed the zone to the area between Cherbourg and Le Havre, specifying invasion points between the River Vire approaching Carentan and the River Orne and Caen ten miles inland as focal points of attack. Beyond that, stateside analysts had to guess, often incorrectly. Quentin Reynolds seemed certain the blow had fallen at Deauville. Ned Calmer, who knew the French coast from his own travels, assumed that the unopposed landings Hottelet had described were in the Seine estuary and that "another kind of fighting" was taking place on the Cotentin Peninsula to the west. In fact, it was the reverse. Hottelet had witnessed the Utah landings on the Cotentin. Gaps and faulty information in the early hours left many smart men wandering wayward paths of military logic.

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Another piece of Churchill's speech came just before 7:00 A.M. "There already are hopes," he said, "that tactical surprise has been achieved." At the same time, CBS was monitoring a British broadcast to Europe saying that "the first reports of the Allied landing in Normandy are good." A German broadcast claimed that the Allies had landed "four parachute divisions." Eliot said that, if that were all true, then accounts of the DNB and Churchill seemed to fit.

At 8:00 A.M., morning radio audiences east of the Rockies were now swelling by millions. (Daytime ratings for the next fourteen hours would be 82 percent above normal, with a spike of 138 percent between 4:00 and 6:00 P.M. Eastern War Time.) The network opened with its regular morning newscast with Allan Jackson. Two London pool reports came in quick succession. Richard Hottelet reviewed Churchill's speech. After a transmission failure from a "remote point in the south of England," NBC's Stanley Richardson gave the first eyewitness report of preliminary naval action and mine sweeping. "As far as the naval phase of our activity was concerned," he said, "not a shot was exchanged with the enemy."

Trout resumed at 8:14 A.M. A late bulletin quoted a British broadcast that the Allies had secured two nameless beachheads. It was the first victory claim on the D-Day scorecard. Eliot called it "perhaps the most important news" since the start of the invasion. After a night of high tension, listeners could feel the suspense begin to slacken.

At 8:43 A.M., Trout cut to London, where Murrow cued NBC's Merrill Mueller, one of four correspondents attached to Eisenhower's headquarters during the night. "Here's the picture," he said. "In a tiny tent some fifteen feet square, we sat and listened to the most amazing delivery of dynamic facts I have ever heard. It is a modest office. The floor is concrete with a couple of rope rugs." Mueller and the others received their briefing as the sun was coming up. Paratroopers had been dropped and ground troops were landing as Ike spoke. "It is not opportune to release the details," Mueller said. "As to the actual plan, I can best put it this way. I have been in on all of General Eisenhower's amphibious assaults, but none was as involved or as mammoth as this one." Mueller had been alone with Eisenhower earlier as they moved among troops and gave a moving description of those quiet hours of limbo between decision and invasion.

Since the first German broadcasts, there was one word that had not been uttered on any American network—*casualties.* At 8:58 A.M., Trout read a SHAEF dispatch from London saying that "casualties among Allied airborne troops have been light." There were no numbers and no official word on ground forces. The numbers would

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come eleven days later when Omar Bradley revealed 3,283 dead and 12,600 wounded, most of them on Omaha.

At 9:00 A.M., Douglas Edwards summarized late news and reviewed the night's pool reports as morning finally reached the West Coast. No transcriptions of the correspondents' reports in the night were replayed, consistent with network policy. Edwards simply read transcripts. At 9:18, the first recording of the invasion from a forward position was ready for broadcast from London. It was at least thirty-six hours old and not especially dramatic—Charles Collingwood interviewing soldiers in an LST before the invasion—and ran less than four minutes.

Finally, at 9:58 A.M., Trout, who had been on the air continuously since 2:00 A.M. and whom *Broadcasting* would call the "iron man of commentators," said: "This particular broadcast is about to end. Columbia will resume its regularly scheduled programs, interrupting for news of extraordinary importance. Bob Trout speaking. This is the Columbia Broadcasting System." The familiar organ music of "Estrellita" then welled up as a procession of fifteen-minute morning soap operas got under way with "Valiant Lady." Trout went home and went to sleep.

At 10:00 A.M. CBS resumed its normal schedule of daytime dramas until "The Romance of Helen Trent" was finally cut off at 12:41 P.M. Commercial copy was replaced by war-bond spots or other patriotic messages. At NBC, network president Niles Trammell had ordered the entire network schedule canceled for twenty-four hours. "Not even the courtesy announcements that are customary in such cases" were honored, said *Broadcasting*. Never had so many sacred cows of broadcast journalism been slaughtered so completely by outside events. When there was no news to report, NBC aired military music or piano filler.

By 11:30 A.M., NBC's Elmer Peterson said: "Reports along the beachhead, although meager, [indicate] that the invasion so far can be termed a success. Allied reconnaissance pilots now record encouragingly that the invasion forces have secured the beachheads and are cutting steadily inland." In the afternoon Congressional response came from Washington and there was reaction around the country. John Daly read eyewitness accounts of returning C-47 pilots who had flown the paratroop drop before H-Hour. At 1:32 P.M., Allan Jackson told listeners that "coastal batteries were virtually silenced and the beachheads were speedily consolidated." Between gaps of piano and military music, hundreds of details filled in a profile of America at what commentator Quincy Howe called, in his distinctive Cambridge twang, "the peak of its military, its economic, its political and its moral power."

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King George spoke at 3:01 P.M. from London. Then Merrill Mueller reported that Admiral Bertram Ramsay, commander of all invasion naval operations, had just told a startled press conference "that the Allies were 100 percent successful in putting the original assault forces ashore in the beachheads." At 3:50 P.M., CBS carried the first report from a correspondent who had actually hit the beaches on foot. Howard Marshall of the BBC said the "main enemy was the weather" and that once ashore, troops "seemed to be in perfectly good order . . . with no semblance of any kind of confusion. The Germans were not putting up a great deal of resistance."

At 6:09 P.M. Allied Communiqué Number 2 was issued without fanfare and confirmed what was already known. It was just past midnight in Normandy now, D+1. Though 155,000 troops were on French soil, no landing had secured its objective. But the battle for Omaha Beach was largely over. "Someday," Bradley later told General Bernard Montgomery, "I'll tell Ike just how close it was in those first few hours." It was in the nature of broadcasting to repeat news for a changing audience, adding new facts with each pass. But as D-Day moved into the prime evening hours in America, fresh facts slowed and invasion coverage fell into a repetitive rut. Selected programs went on the air. "The Passing Parade" on CBS dramatized an imaginary history class in 2044 in which a professor teaches his class what happened a century ago on June 6. It was a stirring radio essay written in the emotional vortex of the moment. George Burns and Gracie Allen also went on the air, Swan Soap commercials intact. After a day of war news, their voices seemed warmly reassuring.

President Roosevelt spoke at 10:00 P.M. on all networks and led the country in a six-minute prayer. He offered no illusions of what lay ahead. "Some [of our sons] will never return," he said. "Embrace these, Father, and receive them into thy Kingdom." NBC followed the address with choir music of "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." In the context of Vietnam, such a moment might have seemed absurd, if not embarrassing. But in 1944 it was supremely appropriate. So was Bob Hope, who turned serious at the Van Nuys Aerodrome before an audience of P-38 pilots.

Shortly after 10:00 P.M. Murrow reminded listeners from London that "during the early phase of every operation, there is an absence of detailed information as both sides try to conceal their intentions. That's what's happening tonight." At 11:10 P.M., Quincy Howe considered the possible power balances in a postwar Europe and noted prophetically the reserves of men and resources in the Soviet Union. "As a great power in the second half of the twentieth century," he said, "the Russians simply can't miss."

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At 11:36 P.M., the twenty-fourth hour of D-Day in America, nothing more was expected except a late pool feed by Charles Shaw from London where morning was breaking. All that remained was to wind the broadcast day down in a reassuring closing. But at 11:30, Trout told listeners that London was about to broadcast a recording made by George Hicks during shore bombardment just before H-Hour. After two failures, the circuit opened. "Go ahead London. . . ."

George Hicks, age thirty-eight, was the London chief for the Blue Network, soon to become ABC. Twenty-three hours before, he had stood on the tower over the signal bridge on the *U.S.S. Ancon* eight miles off Omaha beach watching the first wave of troops move toward shore. As he watched, he spoke into a Commando model Recordgraph, a 75-pound "portable" film recording device loaned by the Navy to pool broadcasts. "We're lying some few miles off the coast of France where the invasion of Europe has begun," he began in a soft monotone like a man describing a golf putt. "The landing craft have been disembarked from their mother ships and are moving in long irregular lines toward the horizon of France." As he talked, the sounds of P-38s above and the chop of the Channel below painted vivid pictures in the theater of the mind. Engineer Bob Massell began recording at 5:40 A.M., paused the machine several times, and stopped just after 6:30 A.M. A total of eleven minutes was recorded.

The *Ancon* was still at anchor when shortly after 11:00 P.M. that night, with twilight still in the sky, Hicks began another off-shore recording. This was the one everyone would remember. He was talking about Allied air superiority as a plane swooped in. "Here comes one of ours now," he said, holding his microphone out to catch the growl of the motors. But as it came closer, he recognized it as a German JU-88. It strafed low over the bridge, and the ship's siren screamed. During the next hour Massell started and stopped the recorder with the flow of the attack. At its peak, a 40mm anti-aircraft piece blasted continuously ten feet from Hick's microphone. The noise of machine-gun fire and the German JU-88's two 1,400-horsepower engines made description as impossible as it was redundant. When the gunners at Hicks's side finally blew the plane from the sky, his microphone caught the spontaneous euphoria of victory at the most personal level of war. He concluded his report ten minutes into June 7, European Time, in the twenty-fourth and final hour of D-Day.

It would be thirty-six hours before Hicks's recording of the air attack was cleared for broadcast to America. At 11:15 P.M., June 7, EWT Pandora's box sprang open. Americans had never heard anything like it. Even the usually circumspect Trout seemed astonished. Not until TV pictures put Baghdad into the crosshairs of smart bombs

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during the Gulf War would the media convey so startlingly the epicenter of battle. Today it may be difficult to appreciate the effect of this event. But before 1944 the networks barred recordings of any kind on the air. The public reason given was that they were a deception on the public; but the real fear was that transcriptions might put too much power in the hands of independent stations and disturb the network monopoly of national distribution of big-name entertainment. No one, of course, bothered to distinguish news from entertainment.

A few recordings had been made during the fighting in Italy. But Hicks subverted this rationale and irrevocably expanded the envelope of editorial possibilities in broadcasting. "Radio's coverage of D-Day may have seen the last of the old prejudice against transcribed programs," the *New York Times* radio critic wrote. The *New York World Telegram* called it "the greatest recording yet to come out of the war." *Broadcasting* magazine called the advent of recordings "perhaps the most significant development" of the war. "Paradoxically," the *New York Times* concluded, "[transcriptions] can be more alive than a 'live' program."

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Hicks's broadcast had many immediate effects. Stations replayed it constantly during the next seventy-two hours. *Vital Speeches* printed its text. It was even released as a record album. Within a month Hicks had his own news program, and the company that made the Recordgraph even ran full-page ads exploiting its moment of destiny.

Not all of the effects were so quick to surface. Hicks took listeners out of the studio and into battle. He brought them sounds they had never heard before. No journalism had ever possessed such direct and transcendent effect. It raised important questions, but they were concealed for the moment in a context of euphoria and celebration. GIs, after all, had shot down a Nazi plane before a national audience. It was cathartic. But suppose a Nazi plane had sunk the *Ancon*? What if Hicks had been obliged to describe an American ship going down in the Channel? If that had happened, other questions might have been asked. Questions such as: How intimate should the civilian's view of combat be? To what extent should noncombatants, untrained in the stresses of battle or steeled by the mental attitudes of martial discipline, be trusted to witness the chaos of a deadly military operation and weigh its meaning in larger contexts? How close can a free and democratic society get to the violence of the battlefield before emotion distorts debate; before erratic public opinion disturbs a nation's ability to sustain stable policies; before the sight of blood subverts the

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political will to fight a good war, or ignites the requisite jingoism to wage a bad one?

Those in power had pondered these questions for years, of course, but only privately. Even in World War II, where national unity seemed unshakable, such matters were often disguised as "morale" issues. When John Huston's army film documentaries, *The Battle of San Pietro* and *Let There Be Light*, were suppressed by the War Department during the war, it was not because they violated military security. It was because they violated "the warrior myth." The power of film and other media over public opinion assumed a new dimension with the coming of broadcasting, whose omnipresence could penetrate the fog of official optimism better than any. In the 1930s and early 1940s there was no shortage of discussion of this influence in important journals. But none discussed how a national radio audience might react to hearing American soldiers under hostile fire. Perhaps it was because radio had not yet gone to war.

But it had, through Orson Welles's famous Halloween red herring of 1938, "The War of the Worlds." If perception, however brief, is reality, then this was radio's first invasion. Dr. Hadley Cantril, at least, thought so. In *Invasion from Mars: A Study in the Psychology of Panic* (Princeton, 1940), he saw a "condition for research" into an aspect of mass communication that never could have been explored in a hypothetical model. "When we analyze this panic," he wrote, "we are able to deal with the most modern type of social group, the radio audience. [It] consists of thousands of small, congruent groups united in time and a common stimulus, making possible the largest grouping of people ever known." Cantril understood that in a moment of crisis a radio audience was fundamentally different from any other. But he never pushed the implications of that observation beyond the Welles program or imagined the political consequences such a group might wield. In 1940 it would have been an act of imagination. Today, however, we can compare the heroic reception that greeted Hicks's combat broadcast to the disturbing hostility that accompanied, say, Morley Safer's Can Ne report a generation later. We know the power of broadcast images of flies swarming over starving children in Somalia to drive American policy in one direction; and the power of images of an American soldier being dragged naked over a dirt street to drive it in the opposite direction.

The effects of Hicks's report fully became evident in the 1960s and beyond. The coming of electronic journalism to the battlefield on D-Day changed the meaning of war in a free society.

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Heart and Soul

SEAN ENRIGHT

I am upstairs, leaning into the upper drawer
Of my mother's bureau, rummaging through
Her jewelry, her combs, scuzzy lint brushes
And all the other things she has to keep:
Orphaned keys, old eyeglasses, Kennedy
Half-dollars in tiny worn manila envelopes.
Thick scratched lenses stare up at me from
Scuffed cat-frames. Salvation Army takes them.

I open the music box that plays
"Lara's Theme" from *Doctor Zhivago*
In a tinny key, watch the works evolve
Under a thin glass sheet, the gentle way
The blurring rotor fits the gears, the steel
Tines rippling in arpeggio, tilting open
The lid to find the catch in the silent hinges
That give when the lid is opened.
I can stop the song between two notes.

Downstairs, my older sisters are playing
"Heart and Soul" four-handed and loud on the upright,
Shoulders bunched, kicking each other for room
To get a foot on a pedal, the whole house
Swaying absently to the counterpoint.

It will be years before I know the song has words.
Heart and soul I fell in love with you
Heart and soul the way a fool would do–

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My sisters rarely make it to the end
Without stopping to argue over a missed note,
Or laughing hysterically after playing much too fast
Or too slow, or lurching at the same time
Into two different favorite pieces.

Meanwhile, "Lara" hangs in the air,
Unfinished and slight. The interrupted note
Takes on the weight of the last. When things
Are serene, I open the lid again, and the final
Notes straggle out on weak wings.
Love leaves things like these in the path
Of those loved, the soft songs and the loud.

✪ SEAN ENRIGHT has poems forthcoming in the *Threepenny Review*, *Sewanee Review*, and *Midwest Quarterly*.

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Crossed Song

ROBERT CORDING

The days slid away in June's longest light,
in Platonic blue skies and greenest grass,
in iris and columbine and the quick yellow
of daylilies. High in the trees, warblers'
whispery *this, this, this* as if in counterpoint
to the earthly towhees' *how to be, to be!*
Each day the melody of their songs as I worked.
And then, just like that, I heard her dying words,
I heard them in the towhees' rising notes
with the same clear urgency—*Don't end up like me.*
I remembered how fear crossed her face,
again and again, like a bird's shadowed wings,
each of her last days a ghostly reminder.
Eighty-two years she worked to get things done,
one way or another, and then her days were over,
the world she lived in no more hers than it ever was.
And outside all that June, the air's blue light
greened with pollen, the nine folded petals
of iris unfolded and glistened in the sun.

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Did the Russian Revolution Have to Happen?

RICHARD PIPES

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION of 1917 was not an event or even a process, but a sequence of disruptive and violent acts that occurred more or less concurrently but involved actors with differing and in some measure contradictory objectives. It began as a revolt of the most conservative elements in Russian society, disgusted by the Crown's familiarity with Rasputin and the mismanagement of the war effort. From the conservatives the revolt spread to the liberals, who challenged the monarchy from fear that, if it remained in office, revolution would become inevitable. Initially, the assault on the monarchy was undertaken not, as widely believed, from fatigue with the war but from a desire to pursue the war more effectively: not to make revolution but to avert one. In February 1917, when the Petrograd garrison refused to fire on civilian crowds, the generals, in agreement with parliamentary politicians, hoping to prevent the mutiny from spreading to the front, convinced Tsar Nicholas II to abdicate. The abdication, made for the sake of military victory, brought down the whole edifice of Russian statehood.

Although initially neither social discontent nor the agitation of the radical intelligentsia played any significant role in these events, both moved to the forefront the instant imperial authority collapsed. In the spring and summer of 1917, peasants began to seize and distribute among themselves non-communal properties. Next, the rebellion spread to frontline troops, who deserted in droves to share in the spoils; to workers, who took control of industrial enterprises; and to ethnic minorities, who wanted greater self-rule. Each group pursued its own objectives, but the cumulative effect of their assault on the

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country's social and economic structure by the autumn of 1917 created in Russia a state of anarchy.

The events of 1917 demonstrated that for all its immense territory and claim to great power status, the Russian Empire was a fragile, artificial structure, held together not by organic bonds connecting rulers and ruled, but by mechanical links provided by the bureaucracy, police, and army. Its 150 million inhabitants were bound neither by strong economic interests nor by a sense of national identity. Centuries of autocratic rule in a country with a predominantly natural economy had prevented the formation of strong lateral ties: Imperial Russia was mostly warp with little woof. This fact was noted at the time by one of Russia's leading historians and political figures, Paul Miliukov:

> To make you understand [the] special character of the Russian Revolution, I must draw your attention to [the] peculiar features, made our own by the whole process of Russia's history. To my mind, all these features converge into one. The fundamental difference which distinguishes Russia's social structure from that of other civilized countries, can be characterized as a certain weakness or lack of a strong cohesion or cementation of elements which form a social compound. You can observe that lack of consolidation in the Russian social aggregate in every aspect of civilized life: political, social, mental and national. From the political point of view, the Russian State institutions lacked cohesion and amalgamation with the popular masses over which they ruled. . . . As a consequence of their later appearance, the State institutions in Eastern Europe necessarily assumed certain forms which were different from those in the West. The State in the East had no time to originate from within, in a process of organic evolution. It was brought to the East from outside.

Once these factors are taken into consideration, it becomes apparent that the Marxist notion that revolution always results from social ("class") discontent cannot be sustained. Although such discontent did exist in Imperial Russia, as it does everywhere, the decisive and immediate factors making for the regime's fall and the resultant turmoil were overwhelmingly political.

Was the Revolution inevitable? It is natural to believe that whatever happens has to happen, and there are historians who rationalize this primitive faith with pseudo-scientific arguments: they would be more convincing if they could predict the future as unerringly as they claim to predict the past. Paraphrasing a familiar legal maxim, one might say that psychologically speaking, occurrence provides nine-tenths of historical justification. Edmund Burke was in his day widely regarded as a madman for criticizing the French Revolution: seventy years later, according to Matthew Arnold, his ideas were still considered "superannuated and conquered by events"—so ingrained is the belief in the

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rationality, and therefore the inevitability, of historical events. The grander they are and the more weighty their consequences, the more they appear part of the natural order of things that it is quixotic to question.

The most that one can say is that a revolution in Russia was more likely than not, and this for several reasons. Of these, perhaps the most weighty was the steady decline of the prestige of tsardom in the eyes of a population accustomed to being ruled by an invincible authority—indeed, seeing in invincibility the criterion of legitimacy. After a century and a half of military victories and expansion, from the middle of the nineteenth century until 1917, Russia suffered one humiliation after another at the hands of foreigners: the defeat, on her own soil, in the Crimean War; the loss at the Congress of Berlin of the fruits of victory over the Turks; the debacle in the war with Japan; and the drubbing at the hands of the Germans in World War I. Such a succession of reverses would have damaged the reputation of any government: in Russia it proved fatal.

Tsarism's disgrace was compounded by the concurrent rise of a revolutionary movement that it was unable to quell despite resort to harsh repression. The half-hearted concessions made in 1905 to share power with society neither made tsarism more popular with the opposition nor raised its prestige in the eyes of the people at large, who simply could not understand how a true sovereign would allow himself to be abused from the forum of a government institution. The Confucian principle of T'ien-ming, or Mandate of Heaven, which in its original meaning linked the ruler's authority to righteous conduct, in Russia derived from forceful conduct: a weak ruler, a "loser," forfeited it. Nothing could be more misleading than to judge a Russian head of state by the standard of either morality or popularity: what mattered was that he inspire fear in friend and foe—that, like Ivan IV, he deserve the sobriquet of "Awesome." Nicholas II fell not because he was hated but because he was held in contempt.

Among the other factors making for revolution was the mentality of the Russian peasantry, a class never integrated into the political structure. Peasants made up 80 percent of Russia's population; and although they took hardly any active part in the conduct of state affairs, in a passive capacity, as an obstacle to change and, at the same time, a permanent threat to the status quo, they were a very unsettling element. It is commonplace to hear that under the old regime the Russian peasant was "oppressed," but it is far from clear just who was oppressing him. On the eve of the Revolution, he enjoyed full civil and legal rights; he also owned, either outright or communally, nine-tenths of the country's agricultural land and the same proportion of

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livestock. Poor by Western European or American standards, he was better off than his father, and freer than his grandfather, who more likely than not had been a serf. Cultivating allotments assigned to him by fellow peasants, he certainly enjoyed greater security than tenant farmers of Ireland, Spain, or Italy.

The problem with Russian peasants was not oppression, but isolation. They were isolated from the country's political, economic, and cultural life, and therefore unaffected by the changes that had occurred since the time that Peter the Great had set Russia on the course of Westernization. Many contemporaries observed that the peasantry remained steeped in Muscovite culture: culturally it had no more in common with the ruling elite or the intelligentsia than the native population of Britain's African colonies had with Victorian England. The majority of Russia's peasants descended from serfs, who were not even subjects, since the monarchy abandoned them to the whim of the landlord and bureaucrat. As a result, for Russia's rural population the state remained even after emancipation an alien and malevolent force that took taxes and recruits but gave nothing in return. The peasant knew no loyalty outside his household and commune. He felt no patriotism and no attachment to the government save for a vague devotion to the distant tsar from whom he expected to receive the land he coveted. An instinctive anarchist, he was never integrated into national life and felt as much estranged from the conservative establishment as from the radical opposition. He looked down on the city and on men without beards: the French traveler, Marquis de Custine, heard it said as early as 1839 that someday Russia would see a revolt of the bearded against the shaven. The existence of this mass of alienated and potentially explosive peasants immobilized the government, which believed that it was docile only from fear and would interpret any political concessions as a signal to rebel.

The traditions of serfdom and the social institutions of rural Russia—the joint family household and the almost universal system of communal landholding—prevented the peasantry from developing qualities required for modern citizenship. While serfdom was not slavery, the two institutions had this in common that, like slaves, serfs had no legal rights and hence no sense of law. Michael Rostovtseff, Russia's leading historian of classical antiquity and an eyewitness of 1917, concluded that serfdom may have been worse than slavery in that a serf had never known freedom, which prevented him from acquiring the qualities of a true citizen: in his opinion, it was a principal cause of bolshevism. To serfs, authority was by its very nature arbitrary: and to defend themselves from it they relied not on appeals to legal or moral rights, but on cunning. They could not conceive of

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government based on principle: life to them was a Hobbesian war of all against all. This attitude fostered despotism: for the absence of inner discipline and respect for law required order to be imposed from the outside. When despotism ceased to be viable, anarchy ensued; and once anarchy had run its course, it inevitably gave rise to a new despotism.

The peasant was revolutionary in one respect only: he did not acknowledge private ownership of land. Although on the eve of the Revolution he owned nine-tenths of the country's arable, he craved for the remaining 10 percent held by landlords, merchants, and non-communal peasants. No economic or legal arguments could change his mind: he felt he had a God-given right to that land and that someday it would be his. And by his he meant the commune's, which would allocate it justly to its members. The prevalence of communal landholding in European Russia was, along with the legacy of serfdom, a fundamental fact of Russian social history. It meant that, along with a poorly developed sense for law, the peasant also had little respect for private property. Both tendencies were exploited and exacerbated by radical intellectuals for their own ends to incite the peasantry against the status quo.

Russia's industrial workers were potentially destabilizing, not because they assimilated revolutionary ideologies—very few of them did and even they were excluded from leadership positions in the revolutionary parties. Rather, since most of them were one or at most two generations removed from the village and only superficially urbanized, they carried with them to the factory rural attitudes only slightly adjusted to industrial conditions. They were not socialists but syndicalists, believing that as their village relatives were entitled to all the land, so they had a right to the factories. Politics interested them no more than it did the peasants: in this sense, too, they were under the influence of primitive, non-ideological anarchism. Furthermore, industrial labor in Russia was numerically too insignificant to play a major role in revolution: with at most 3 million workers (a high proportion of them peasants seasonally employed), they represented a mere 2 percent of the population. Hordes of graduate students, steered by their professors, in the Soviet Union as well as the West, especially the United States, have assiduously combed historical sources in the hope of unearthing evidence of worker radicalism in pre-revolutionary Russia. The results are weighty tomes, filled with mostly meaningless events and statistics, that prove only that while history is always interesting, history books can be both vacuous and dull.

A major and arguably decisive factor making for revolution was the intelligentsia, which in Russia attained greater influence than any-

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where else. The peculiar "ranking" system of the tsarist civil service excluded outsiders from the administration, estranging the best-educated elements and making them susceptible to fantastic schemes of social reform, conceived but never tried in Western Europe. The absence until 1906 of representative institutions and a free press, combined with the spread of education, enabled the cultural elite to claim the right to speak on behalf of a mute people. There exists no evidence that the intelligentsia actually reflected the opinion of the "masses": on the contrary, the evidence indicates that both before and after the Revolution peasants and workers deeply mistrusted intellectuals. This became apparent in 1917 and the years that followed. But since the true will of the people had no means of expression—at any rate, until the short-lived constitutional order introduced in 1906—the intelligentsia was able with some success to pose as its spokesman.

As in other countries where it lacked legitimate political outlets, the intelligentsia in Russia constituted itself into a caste: and since ideas were what gave it identity and cohesion, it developed extreme intellectual intolerance. Adopting the Enlightenment view of man as nothing but material substance shaped by the environment, and its corollary, that changes in the environment inevitably change human nature, it saw "revolution" not as the replacement of one government by another, but as something incomparably more ambitious: a total transformation of the human environment for the purpose of creating a new breed of human beings—in Russia, of course, but also everywhere else. Its stress on the inequities of the status quo was merely a device for gaining popular support: no rectification of these inequities would have persuaded radical intellectuals to give up their revolutionary aspirations. Such beliefs linked members of various left-wing parties: anarchists, Socialists-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, and Bolsheviks. Although couched in scientific terms, their views were immune to contrary evidence, and hence more akin to religious faith.

The intelligentsia, defined as intellectuals craving power, stood in total and uncompromising hostility to the existing order: nothing the tsarist regime could do short of committing suicide would have satisfied it. They were revolutionaries not for the sake of improving the condition of the people but for the sake of gaining domination over the people and remaking them in their own image. They confronted the Imperial regime with a challenge that it had no way of repulsing short of employing the kind of methods introduced later by Lenin. Reforms, whether those of the 1860s, or those of 1905–6, only whetted the appetite of the radicals and spurred them to still greater revolutionary excesses.

Buffeted by peasant demands and under direct assault from the

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radical intelligentsia, the monarchy had only one means of averting collapse, and that was to broaden the base of its authority by sharing power with conservative elements of society. Historic precedent indicates that successful democracies have initially limited power sharing to the upper orders; these eventually came under pressure from the rest of the population, with the result that their privileges turned into common rights. Involving conservatives, who were far more numerous than the radicals, in both decision making and administration would have forged something of an organic bond between the government and society, assuring the crown of support in the event of upheavals and, at the same time, isolating the radicals. Such a course was urged on the monarchy by some farsighted officials and private individuals. It should have been adopted in the 1860s, at the time of the Great Reforms, but it was not. When finally compelled in 1905 by a nationwide rebellion to concede a parliament, the monarchy no longer had this option available, for the combined liberal and radical opposition forced it to concede something close to a democratic franchise. This resulted in the conservatives in the Duma being submerged by militant intellectuals and anarchist peasants.

World War I subjected every belligerent country to immense strains, which could be overcome only by close collaboration between government and citizenry in the name of patriotism. In Russia such collaboration never materialized. As soon as military reverses dissipated the initial patriotic enthusiasm and the country had to brace for a war of attrition, the tsarist regime found itself unable to mobilize public support. Even its admirers agree that at the time of its collapse the monarchy was hanging in the air.

The motivation of the tsarist regime in refusing to share political power with its supporters, and when finally forced to do so, sharing it grudgingly and deceitfully, was complex. Deep in their hearts, the Court, the bureaucracy, and the professional officer corps were permeated with a patrimonial spirit that viewed Russia as the tsar's private domain. Although in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Muscovite patrimonial institutions were gradually dismantled, the mentality survived. And not only in official circles: the peasantry, too, thought in patrimonial terms, believing in strong, undivided authority and treating the land as tsarist property. Nicholas II took it for granted that he had to keep autocracy in trust for his heir: unlimited authority was to him the equivalent of a property title, which, in his capacity of trustee, he had no right to dilute. He never rid himself of the feeling of guilt that to save the throne in 1905 he had agreed to divide ownership with the nation's elected representatives.

The tsar and his advisers also feared that sharing authority with

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even a small part of society would disorganize the bureaucratic apparatus and open the door to still greater demands for popular participation. In the latter event, the main beneficiary would be the intelligentsia, which Nicholas and his advisers considered utterly incompetent. There was the additional concern that the peasants would misinterpret such concessions and go on a rampage. And finally, there was the opposition to reforms of the bureaucracy, which, accountable only to the tsar, administered the country at its discretion, deriving from this fact numerous benefits.

Such factors explain but do not justify the monarchy's refusal to give conservatives a voice in the government, the more so that the variety and complexity of issues facing it deprived the bureaucracy of much effective authority in any event. The emergence in the second half of the nineteenth century of capitalist institutions shifted much of the control over the country's resources into private hands, undermining what was left of patrimonialism.

In sum, while the collapse of tsarism was not inevitable, it was made likely by deep-seated cultural and political flaws that prevented the tsarist regime from adjusting to the economic and cultural growth of the country, flaws that proved fatal under the pressures generated by World War I. If the possibility of such adjustment existed, it was aborted by the activities of a radical intelligentsia bent on toppling the government and using Russia as a springboard for world revolution. It was cultural and political shortcomings of this nature that brought about the collapse of tsarism, not "oppression" or "misery." We are dealing here with a national tragedy whose causes recede deep into the country's past. Economic and social difficulties did not contribute significantly to the revolutionary threat that hung over Russia before 1917. Whatever grievances they may have harbored—real and fancied—the "masses" neither needed nor desired a revolution: the only group interested in it was the intelligentsia. Stress on alleged popular discontent and class conflict derives more from ideological preconceptions than from the facts at hand—namely, from the discredited idea that political developments are always and everywhere driven by socio-economic conflicts, that they are mere "foam" on the surface of currents that really guide human destiny.

The relatively minor role played by social and economic factors in the Russian Revolution becomes apparent when one scrutinizes the events of February 1917. February was not a "workers' revolution": industrial labor played in it the role of a chorus that reacted to and amplified the actions of the true protagonist, the army. The mutiny of the Petrograd garrison stimulated disorders among the civilian popu-

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lation unhappy over inflation and shortages. The mutiny could have been contained had Nicholas chosen to quell it with the same brutality Lenin and Trotsky employed four years later when faced with the Kronshtadt rising and nationwide peasant rebellions. But Lenin's and Trotsky's sole concern was holding on to power, whereas Nicholas cared for Russia. When the generals and Duma politicians persuaded him that he had to go to save the army and avert a humiliating capitulation, he acquiesced. Had staying in power been his supreme objective, he could easily have concluded peace with Germany and turned the army loose against the mutineers. The record leaves no doubt that the myth of the tsar being forced from the throne by the rebellious workers and peasants is just that. The tsar yielded not to a rebellious populace but to generals and politicians, and he did so from a sense of patriotic duty.

The social revolution followed rather than preceded the act of abdication. The garrison soldiers, peasants, workers, and ethnic minorities, each group pursuing its own aims, made the country ungovernable: what chance there was of restoring order was frustrated by the insistence of the intelligentsia running the soviets that they, and not the Provisional Government, were the true source of legitimate authority. Alexander Kerensky's inept intrigues, coupled with his insistence that democracy had no enemies on the Left, accelerated the Government's downfall. The country at large—its political entities as well as its resources—became the subject of *duvan*, the division of loot, which no one was strong enough to stop until it had run its course.

Lenin rode to power on that anarchy, which he did much to promote. He promised every discontented group what it wanted. He took over the Socialist-Revolutionary program of "land socialization" to win over the peasants. Among the workers, he encouraged syndicalist trends of "worker control" of factories. To the men in uniform, he held out the prospect of peace. To the ethnic minorities, he offered national self-determination. In fact, all these pledges ran contrary to his program and all were violated soon after they had served their purpose, which was to undermine the Provisional Government's efforts to stabilize the country.

Similar deception was applied to divest the Provisional Government of authority. Lenin and Trotsky concealed their bid for one-party dictatorship with slogans calling for the transfer of power to the soviets and the Constituent Assembly, and they formalized it by a fraudulently convened Congress of Soviets. No one but a handful of the leading figures in the Bolshevik party knew the truth behind these promises and slogans: few, therefore, realized what had happened in

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Petrograd on the night of October 25, 1917. The so-called "October Revolution" was a classic coup d'état. The preparations for it were so clandestine that when Lev Kamenev disclosed, in a newspaper interview a week before the event was to take place, that the party intended to seize power, Lenin declared him a traitor and demanded his expulsion. Genuine revolutions, of course, are not scheduled and cannot be betrayed.

The ease with which the Bolsheviks toppled the Provisional Government—in Lenin's words, it was like "lifting a feather"—has persuaded many historians that the October coup was "inevitable." But it can appear as such only in retrospect. Lenin himself thought it an extremely chancy undertaking. In urgent letters to the Central Committee in September and October 1917 from his hideaway, he insisted that success depended entirely on the speed and resoluteness with which the armed insurrection was carried out: "To delay the uprising is death," he wrote on October 24, "everything hangs on a hair." These were not the sentiments of a person prepared to trust the forces of history. Trotsky later asserted—and who was in a better position to know?—that if "neither Lenin nor [he himself] had been in Petersburg, there would have been no October Revolution." Can one conceive of an "inevitable" historical event dependent on two individuals?

And if this evidence still fails to convince, one only has to look closely at the events of October 1917 in Petrograd to find the "masses" acting as spectators, ignoring Bolshevik appeals to storm the Winter Palace, where sat elderly ministers of the Provisional Government clad in overcoats, defended by youthful cadets, a battalion of women, and a platoon of invalids. We have it on the authority of Trotsky himself that the October "revolution" in Petrograd was accomplished by "at most" 25,000 to 30,000 persons—this in a country of 150 million and a city with 400,000 workers and a garrison of over 200,000 soldiers.

From the instant he seized dictatorial power, Lenin proceeded to uproot all existing institutions so as to clear the ground for a regime subsequently labeled "totalitarian." This term has fallen out of favor with Western sociologists and political scientists determined to avoid what they consider the language of the Cold War. It deserves note, however, how quickly it found favor in Russia the instant the censor's prohibitions against its use had been lifted. This kind of regime, unknown to previous history, imposed the authority of a private but omnipotent "party" on the state, claiming the right to subject to itself all organized life without exception, and enforcing its will by means of unbounded terror.

Seen in perspective, Lenin owes his historical prominence not to

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his statesmanship, which was of a very inferior order, but to his generalship. He was one of history's great conquerors: a distinction not vitiated by the fact that the country he conquered was his own. His innovation, the reason for his success, was militarizing politics. He was the first head of state to treat politics, domestic as well as foreign, as warfare in the literal sense of the word, the objective of which was not to compel the enemy to submit but to annihilate him. This innovation gave Lenin significant advantages over his opponents, for whom warfare was either the antithesis of politics or else politics pursued by other means. Militarizing politics and, as a corollary, politicizing warfare enabled him first to seize power and then to hold on to it. It did not help him build a viable social and political order. He grew so accustomed to storming on all "fronts" that even after asserting undisputed authority over Soviet Russia and her dependencies, he had to invent ever new enemies to fight and destroy: now the church, now the Socialists-Revolutionaries, now the intelligentsia. This belligerence became a fixed feature of the Communist regime, culminating in Stalin's notorious "theory" that the closer communism approached final victory, the more intense grew social conflicts—a notion that justified a bloodbath of unprecedented ferocity. It caused the Soviet Union, in the sixty years that followed Lenin's death, to exhaust itself in entirely unnecessary domestic and foreign conflicts that eviscerated her both physically and spiritually.

The failure of communism, which since 1991 is no longer in dispute, having been conceded even by the ex-leaders of the ex-Soviet Union, is often blamed on human beings' falling short of its allegedly lofty ideals. Even if the endeavor failed, apologists say, its aspirations were noble and the attempt worthwhile: in support of which claim they could cite the Roman poet Propertius, "In magnis et voluisse sat est"—"In great endeavors, even to want is enough." But how great was an endeavor so at odds with ordinary human desires that, to pursue it, recourse had to be had to the most inhuman methods?

The Communist experiment is often labeled "utopian." Thus a recent history of the Soviet Union, far from sympathetic, bears the title *Utopia in Power*. The term, however, is applicable only in that limited sense in which Engels used it to criticize socialists who did not accept his and Marx's "scientific" doctrines, by making in their visions no allowance for historic and social realities. Lenin himself was forced to admit toward the end of his life that the Bolsheviks, too, were guilty of ignoring the cultural realities of Russia and its unpreparedness for the economic and social order that they tried to impose on it. The Bolsheviks ceased to be utopians when, once it had become obvious

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that the ideal was unattainable, they persisted in the attempt with resort to unrestrained violence. Utopian communities always postulated the concurrence of their members in the task of creating a "cooperative commonwealth." The Bolsheviks, by contrast, not only did not care to obtain such concurrence, but dismissed as "counter-revolutionary" every manifestation of individual or group initiative. They also displayed a constitutional inability to deal with opinions different from their own except by abuse and repression. For these reasons they should be regarded not as utopians but as fanatics: since they refused to admit defeat even after it stared them in the face, they satisfied Santayana's definition of fanaticism as redoubling one's efforts after forgetting one's aim.

Marxism and bolshevism, its offspring, were products of an era in European intellectual life obsessed with violence. The Darwinian theory of natural selection was promptly translated into a social philosophy in which uncompromising conflict occupied a central place. "No one who has not waded through some sizeable part of the literature of the period 1870–1914," writes Jacques Barzun, "has any conception of the extent to which it is one long call for blood, nor of the variety of parties, classes, nations, and races whose blood was separately and contradictorily clamored for by the enlightened citizens of the ancient civilization of Europe." No one embraced this philosophy more enthusiastically than the Bolsheviks: "merciless" violence, violence that strove for the destruction of every actual and potential opponent, was for Lenin not only the most effective, but the only way of dealing with problems. And even if some of his associates shrank from such inhumanity, they could not escape the corrupting influence of their leader.

Russian nationalists depict communism as alien to Russian culture and tradition, as a kind of plague imported from the West. The notion of communism as a virus cannot withstand the slightest examination since, although an intellectual movement international in scope, it first took hold in Russia and among Russians: the Bolshevik party both before and after the Revolution was overwhelmingly Russian in composition, acquiring its earliest base in European Russia and among Russian settlers in the borderlands. Indisputably, the theories underpinning bolshevism, notably those of Karl Marx, were of Western origin. But it is equally indisputable that Bolshevik practices were indigenous, for nowhere in the West has Marxism led to the totalitarian excesses of Leninism-Stalinism. In Russia, and subsequently in Third World countries with similar traditions, Marxism fell on a soil devoid of traditions of self-rule, observance of law,

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and respect for private property. A cause that yields different results in different circumstances can hardly serve as a sufficient explanation.

Marxism had libertarian as well as authoritarian strains, and which of the two prevailed depended on a country's political culture. In Russia, those elements in the Marxist doctrine gained ascendancy that fitted her patrimonial heritage. The Russian political tradition since the Middle Ages was for the government—or, more precisely, the ruler—to be the subject and "the land" the object. This tradition fused readily with the Marxist concept of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" under which the ruling party claimed undivided control over the country's inhabitants and resources. Marx's notion of such a "dictatorship" was sufficiently vague for it to be filled with the content nearest at hand, which in Russia was the historic legacy of patrimonialism. It was the grafting of Marxist ideology onto the sturdy stem of Russia's patrimonial heritage that produced totalitarianism. Totalitarianism cannot be explained solely with reference either to Marxist doctrine or to Russian history: it was the fruit of their union.

Important as ideology was, however, its role in the shaping of Communist Russia must not be exaggerated. If individuals or groups profess certain beliefs and refer to them to guide their conduct, they may be said to act under the influence of ideas. But when ideas are used not so much to direct one's personal conduct as to justify one's domination over others, whether by persuasion or force, the issue becomes confused, because it is not possible to determine whether such persuasion or force serves ideas or, on the contrary, ideas serve to secure or legitimize such domination. In the case of the Bolsheviks, there are strong grounds for maintaining the latter to be the case, because they distorted Marxism in every conceivable way—first to gain political power and then to hold on to it. If Marxism means anything, it means two propositions: that as capitalist society matures it is doomed to collapse from inner contradictions, and that this collapse ("revolution") is accomplished by industrial labor ("the proletariat"). A regime motivated by Marxist theory would at a minimum adhere to these two principles. What do we see in Soviet Russia? A "socialist revolution" carried out in an economically underdeveloped country in which capitalism was still in its infancy and power was taken by a party committed to the view that the working class left to its own devices is unrevolutionary. Subsequently, at every stage of its history, the Communist regime in Russia did whatever it had to do to beat off challengers, without regard to Marxist doctrine, even as it cloaked its actions with Marxist slogans. Lenin succeeded precisely because he was free of the Marxist scruples that inhibited the Mensheviks. In view

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of these facts, ideology has to be treated as a subsidiary factor: an inspiration and a mode of thinking of the new ruling class, perhaps, but not a set of principles that either determined its actions or explains them to posterity. As a rule, the less one knows about the actual course of the Russian Revolution, the more inclined one is to attribute a dominant influence to Marxist ideas.

For all their disagreements, contemporary Russian nationalists and many liberals are at one in denying links between tsarist and Communist Russia. The former refuse to acknowledge the connection because it would make Russia responsible for her own misfortunes, which they prefer to blame on foreigners, especially Jews. In this they resemble German conservatives who depict nazism as a general European phenomenon in order to deny that it had any antecedents in Germany's past, or that Germany bears any particular blame for it. Such an approach finds a ready audience among the peoples affected, since it shifts the responsibility for whatever went wrong onto others.

Liberal and radical intellectuals—not so much in Russia as abroad—similarly deny affinities between communism and tsarism because that would make the whole Revolution a costly and meaningless blunder. They prefer to emphasize the declared objectives of the Communists and compare them with the realities of tsarism. This procedure does produce a glaring contrast. The picture, of course, changes substantially as soon as one compares Communist and tsarist realities.

The affinities between the regime of Lenin and traditional Russia were noticed by more than one contemporary, among them the historian Paul Miliukov, the philosopher Nicholas Berdiaev, the veteran socialist Paul Akselrod, and the novelist Boris Pilniak. According to Miliukov, bolshevism had two aspects:

> One is international; the other is genuinely Russian. The international aspect of Bolshevism is due to its origin in a very advanced European theory. Its purely Russian aspect is chiefly concerned with its practice, which is deeply rooted in Russian reality and, far from breaking with the "ancien régime," reasserts Russia's past in the present. As geological upheavals bring the lower strata of the earth to the surface as evidence of the early ages of our planet, so Russian Bolshevism, by discarding the thin upper social layer, has laid bare the uncultured and unorganized substratum of Russian historical life.

Berdiaev, who viewed the Revolution primarily in spiritual terms, denied that Russia even had a Revolution: "All of the past is repeating itself and acts only behind new masks."

Even someone entirely ignorant of Russia should find it inconceiv-

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able that on a single day, October 25, 1917, in consequence of an armed putsch, the course of a thousand-year-old history of a vast and populous country could undergo complete transformation. The same people, inhabiting the same territory, speaking the same language, heirs to a common past, could hardly have been fashioned into different creatures by a sudden change of government. It takes great faith in the power of decrees, even decrees backed by physical force, to believe in the possibility of such drastic mutation, unknown to nature. Only by viewing human beings as inert matter entirely molded by the environment could such an absurdity even be entertained.

To analyze the continuities between the two systems reference needs to be made to the concept of patrimonialism, which underpinned the Muscovite government and in many ways survived in the institutions and political culture of Russia to the end of the old regime.

Tsarist patrimonialism rested on four pillars: one, autocracy, that is, personal rule unconstrained by either constitution or representative bodies; two, the autocrat's ownership of the country's resources, which is to say, the virtual absence of private property; three, the autocrat's right to demand unlimited services from his subjects, resulting in the lack of either collective or individual rights; and four, state control of information. A comparison of tsarist rule at its zenith with the Communist regime as it looked by the time of Lenin's death reveals unmistakable affinities.

To begin with, autocracy. Traditionally, the Russian monarch concentrated in his hands full legislative and executive powers, and exercised them without interference from external bodies. He administered with the help of a service nobility and a bureaucracy that owed allegiance to his person rather than to the nation or the state. Lenin from the first day in office instinctively followed this model. Although as a concession to the ideal of democracy he gave the country a constitution and representative bodies, they performed purely ceremonial functions, since the constitution was not binding on the Communist party, the country's true ruler, and the parliament was not elected but handpicked by the same party. In the performance of his duties, Lenin resembled the most autocratic of the tsars, Peter I and Nicholas I, in that he insisted on personally attending to the most trifling details of state affairs, as if the country were his private estate.

As had been the case with his Muscovite forerunners, the Soviet ruler claimed title to the country's productive and income-producing wealth. Beginning with decrees nationalizing land and industries, the government took over all assets except for articles of purely personal use; and since the government was in the hands of one party, and that

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party, in turn, obeyed the will of its leader, Lenin was de facto owner of the country's material resources. (De jure ownership lay with the "people," defined as synonymous with the Communist party.) Industries were run for the state by state-appointed managers. Their output and, until March 1921, the product of the land were disposed of as the Kremlin saw fit. Urban real estate was nationalized. With private commerce outlawed (until 1921 and again after 1928), the Soviet regime controlled all legitimate wholesale and retail trade. These measures went beyond the practices of Muscovy, but they perpetuated its principle that Russia's sovereign not only ruled the country but owned it.

He also owned its people. The Bolsheviks reinstituted obligatory state service, one of the distinguishing features of Muscovite absolutism. In Muscovy, the subjects of the tsar, with minor exceptions, had to work for him either directly, in the armed forces or the bureaucracy, or indirectly, by cultivating his land or that conditionally leased to his servitors. As a result, the entire population was bonded to the Crown. Its manumission began in 1762, when the gentry were given the right to retire into private life, and concluded ninety-nine years later with the liberation of the serfs. The Bolsheviks promptly revived the Muscovite practice, unknown in any other country, of requiring every citizen to work for the state: the so-called "universal labor obligation" introduced in January 1918 and enforced, according to Lenin's instructions, by the threat of execution would have been perfectly understandable to a seventeenth-century Russian. In regard to peasants, the Bolsheviks revived also the practice of *tiaglo*, or forced labor, such as lumbering and carting, for which they received no compensation. As in seventeenth-century Russia, no inhabitant was allowed to leave the country without permission.

The Communist bureaucracy, both that employed by the party and that by the state, quite naturally slipped into the ways of its tsarist predecessor. A service class with duties and privileges but no inherent rights, it constituted a closed and minutely graded caste accountable exclusively to its superiors. Like the tsarist bureaucracy, it stood above the law. It also operated without *glasnost*, that is, outside public scrutiny, administering much of the time by means of secret circulars. Under tsarism, advancement to the topmost ranks of the bureaucratic hierarchy bestowed hereditary nobility. For Communist officials, advancement to the highest ranks was rewarded with inclusion in the rolls of the *nomenklatura*, which carried entitlements beyond the reach of ordinary servitors, not to speak of the common people—the Communist equivalent of a service nobility. The Soviet bureaucracy, like the tsarist, did not tolerate administrative bodies outside its control

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and made certain they were promptly "statified"—that is, integrated into its chain of command. This it did to the soviets, the new regime's putative legislative organs, and to the trade unions, agencies of its equally putative "ruling class."

That the Communist bureaucracy should so quickly adapt old ways is not surprising, given that the new regime in so many respects continued old habits. Continuity was facilitated by the fact that a high percentage of Soviet administrative posts was staffed by ex-tsarist functionaries, who brought with them and communicated to Communist newcomers habits acquired in the tsarist service.

The security police was another important organization that the Bolsheviks adopted from tsarism, since they had no other prototype for what became a central institution of totalitarianism. Tsarist Russia was unique in that she alone had two police formations, one to defend the state from its citizens, the other to protect citizens from each other. State crimes were very loosely defined, little distinction being drawn between intention and deed. The tsarist state police developed sophisticated methods of surveillance, infiltrating society through a network of paid informers and the opposition parties with the help of professional agents. The tsarist Department of Police had the unique authority to impose administrative exile for crimes that were not crimes in any other European country, such as expressing a desire for change in the political system. Through a variety of prerogatives granted it in the aftermath of the assassination of Alexander II, the tsarist police between 1881 and 1905 virtually ruled Russia. Its methods were all too familiar to Russian revolutionaries who, on coming to power, adopted them and turned them against their enemies. The Cheka and its successors assimilated the practices of the tsarist state police to such an extent that, as late as the 1980s, the KGB distributed to its staff manuals prepared by the Okhrana nearly a century earlier.

Finally, as concerns censorship. In the first half of the nineteenth century Russia was the only European country to enforce preventive censorship. In the 1860s censorship was eased, and in 1906 it was abolished. The Bolsheviks reinstituted the most oppressive tsarist practices, shutting down every publication that did not support their regime, and subjecting all forms of intellectual and artistic expression to preventive censorship. They also nationalized all publishing enterprises. These procedures reverted to the practices of Muscovy; they had no European equivalent.

In all these instances the Bolsheviks found models not in the writings of Marx, Engels, or other Western socialists, but in their own history: not so much the history described in books, but that which they had experienced on their own persons fighting tsarism under

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the regime of Reinforced and Extraordinary Safeguard instituted in the 1880s to deter the revolutionary intelligentsia. These practices they justified with arguments borrowed from socialist literature that gave them a mandate to behave with a brutality and ruthlessness that far exceeded anything known under tsarism, for tsarism was inhibited by the desire to be viewed favorably by Europe, whereas the Bolsheviks treated Europe as an enemy.

It is not that the Bolsheviks wanted to copy tsarist practices: on the contrary, they wanted to have nothing in common with them, to do the very opposite. They emulated them by force of circumstance. Once they rejected democracy—and this they did conclusively in January 1918 by dispersing the Constituent Assembly—they had no choice but to govern autocratically. And to rule autocratically meant ruling the people in a manner to which they had been accustomed. The regime introduced by Lenin on coming to power had its immediate antecedents in the most reactionary reign of Imperial Russia, that of Alexander III, under which Lenin had grown up. It is uncanny how many of his measures replicated the "counter-reforms" of the 1880s and 1890s, even if under different labels.

Nor is it surprising that the Russian Revolution should have ended up where it did. Revolutionaries may have the most radical ideas of remaking man and society, but they must build the new order with human material molded by the past. For that reason, sooner or later, they succumb to the past themselves. *Revolution* derives from the Latin *revolvere*, "to revolve," a concept originally applied to the motions of the planets, and used by medieval astrologers to explain sudden and unexpected turns in human events. And objects that revolve do return to their starting point.

One of the most controversial issues arising from the Russian Revolution is the relationship of Leninism to Stalinism—in other words, Lenin's responsibility for Stalin. Western Communists, fellow travelers, and sympathizers deny any link between the two Communist leaders, insisting that Stalin not only did not continue Lenin's work but repudiated it. This view became mandatory in Soviet historiography after 1956 when Nikita Khrushchev delivered his secret address to the Twentieth Party Congress: it has served the purpose of disassociating the post-Stalinist regime from its despised predecessor. Curiously, the same people who depict Lenin's rise to power as inevitable abandon their philosophy of history when they come to Stalin, whom they represent as a historic aberration. They have been unable to explain, however, how and why history should have taken a thirty-year detour from its allegedly predetermined course.

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An examination of Stalin's career reveals that he did not seize power after Lenin's death but ascended to it, step by step, initially under Lenin's sponsorship. Lenin came to rely on Stalin in managing the party apparatus, especially after 1920, when the party was torn by democratic heresies. The sources indicate that contrary to Trotsky's retrospective claims, Lenin depended not on him but on his rival to carry on much of the day-to-day business of government and to advise him on a great variety of issues of domestic and foreign policy. Thanks to this patronage, by 1922, when illness forced Lenin increasingly to withdraw from affairs of state, Stalin was the only person to belong to all three of the ruling organs of the Central Committee: the Politburo, the Orgburo, and the Secretariat. In these capacities, he supervised the appointment of executive personnel to virtually all branches of the party and state administration. Owing to the rules established by Lenin to forestall the rise of an organized opposition ("factionalism"), Stalin could repress criticism of his stewardship on the grounds that it was directed not at him but at the party and therefore, by definition, served the cause of the counter-revolution. That in the last months of his active life Lenin developed doubts about Stalin and came close to breaking off personal relations with him should not obscure the fact that until that moment he had done everything in his power to promote Stalin's ascendancy. And even when Lenin became disappointed with his protégé, the shortcomings he attributed to him were not very serious—mainly rudeness and impatience—and related more to his managerial qualifications than to his personality. There is no indication that Lenin ever saw Stalin as a traitor to his brand of communism.

But even the one difference separating the two men—that Lenin did not kill fellow Communists and Stalin did so on a massive scale—is not as significant as may appear at first sight. Toward outsiders, people not belonging to his order of the elect—and that included 99.7 percent of his compatriots—Lenin showed no human feelings whatever, sending them to their death by the tens of thousands, often to serve as an example to others. A high Cheka official, I. S. Unshlikht, in his tender recollections of Lenin written in 1934, stressed with unconcealed pride how Lenin "mercilessly made short shrift of philistine party members who complained of the mercilessness of the Cheka, how he laughed at and mocked the 'humanness' of the capitalist world." The difference between the two men lay in the conception of the "outsider." Lenin's insiders were to Stalin outsiders, people who owed loyalty not to him but to the Party's founder and who competed with him for power; and toward them, he showed the same inhuman cruelty that Lenin had displayed against his enemies.

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Beyond the strong personal links binding the two men, Stalin was a true Leninist in that he faithfully followed his patron's political philosophy and practices. Every ingredient of what has come to be known as Stalinism save one—murdering fellow Communists—he had learned from Lenin, and that includes the two actions for which he is most severely condemned: collectivization and mass terror. Stalin's megalomania, his vindictiveness, his morbid paranoia, and other odious personal qualities should not obscure the fact that his ideology and modus operandi were Lenin's. A man of meager education, he had no other model or source of ideas.

In theory, one can conceive a Trotsky, Bukharin, or Zinoviev grasping the torch from the dying Lenin and leading the Soviet Union in a different direction from Stalin. What one cannot conceive is how they could have been in a position to do so, given the realities of the power structure at the time of Lenin's illness. By throttling democratic impulses in the Party in order to protect his dictatorship, and by imposing on the Party a top-heavy command structure, Lenin ensured that the man who controlled the central party apparatus controlled the Party and through it, the state. And that man was Stalin.

The Revolution inflicted on Russia staggering human losses. The statistics are so shocking that they inevitably give rise to doubts. But unless someone can come up with alternate numbers, the historian is compelled to accept them, the more so because they are shared alike by Communist and non-Communist demographers.

The following table indicates the population of the Soviet Union within the borders of 1926 (in millions):

Fall 1917: 147.6
Early 1920: 140.6
Early 1921: 136.8
Early 1922: 134.9

The decrease—12.7 million—was owing to deaths from combat and epidemics (approximately 2 million each); emigration (about 2 million); and famine (over 5 million).

But these figures tell only half the story, since obviously, under normal conditions, the population would not have remained stationary but would have grown. Projections by Russian statisticians indicate that in 1922 the population should have numbered more than 160 million rather than 135 million. If this figure is taken into account, and the number of émigrés is deducted, the human casualties of the Revolution in Russia—actual and due to the deficit in births—rise to

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between 25 and 26 million, two and a half times the fatalities suffered by all the belligerent countries in World War I combined, and a loss nearly equal to the combined populations at the time of the four Scandinavian countries plus Belgium and the Netherlands. The actual losses were heaviest in the age group 16–49, particularly in its male contingent, of which the Revolution had eradicated by August 1920—that is, before the famine had done its work—29 percent.

Can one—should one—view such an unprecedented calamity with dispassion? So great is the prestige of science in our time that not a few contemporary scholars have adopted, along with scientific methods of investigation, the scientists' habit of moral and emotional detachment, the habit of treating all phenomena as "natural" and therefore ethically neutral. They are loath to allow for human volition in historical events because free will, being unpredictable, eludes scientific analysis. Historical "inevitability" is for them what the laws of nature are to the scientist. But it has long been known that the objects of science and the object of history are vastly different. We properly expect physicians to diagnose diseases and suggest remedies in a cool and dispassionate manner. An accountant analyzing the finances of a company, an engineer investigating the safety of equipment, an intelligence officer estimating enemy capabilities obviously must remain emotionally uninvolved. This is so because their investigations have as their objective the making of sound decisions. But for the historian the decisions have already been made by others, and detachment adds nothing to understanding. Indeed, it detracts from it: for how can one comprehend dispassionately events that have been produced in the heat of passion? Aristotle, who in all matters preached moderation, wrote in the Nicomachean Ethics that there were situations in which "inirascibility" was unacceptable: "For those who are not angry at things they should be angry at are deemed fools."

The assembling of the relevant facts must certainly be carried out dispassionately, without either anger or enthusiasm: this aspect of the historian's craft is no different from the scientist's. But this is only the beginning of the historian's task, because the sorting of these facts—the decision as to which are "relevant"—requires judgment, and judgment rests on values. Facts as such are meaningless, since they furnish no guide to their selection, ordering, and emphasis: to "make sense" of the past, the historian must follow some principle. He usually does have it: even the most "scientific" historians, consciously or not, operate from preconceptions. As a rule, these are rooted in economic determinism because economic and social data lend themselves to statistical demonstration, which creates the illusion of impartiality.

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The refusal to pass judgment on historical events rests on moral values, too—namely, the silent premise that whatever occurs is natural and therefore right: it amounts to an apology of those who happen to come out on top.

Judged in terms of its own aspirations, the Communist regime was a monumental failure: it succeeded in one thing only—staying in power. But since for Bolsheviks power was not an end in itself but a means to an end, its mere retention does not qualify the experiment as a success. The Bolsheviks made no secret of their aims: toppling everywhere regimes based on private property and replacing them with a worldwide union of socialist societies. They succeeded nowhere outside the boundaries of what had been the Russian Empire in spreading their regime until the end of World War II, when the Red Army stepped into the vacuum created in Eastern Europe by the surrender of Germany, the Chinese Communists seized control of their country from the Japanese, and Communist dictatorships, aided by Moscow, established themselves in a number of recently emancipated colonial areas.

Once it had proven impossible to export communism, the Bolsheviks in the 1920s dedicated themselves to constructing a socialist society at home. This endeavor failed as well. Lenin had expected through a combination of expropriations and terror to transform his country in a matter of months into the world's leading economic power: instead, he ruined the economy he had inherited. He had expected the Communist party to provide disciplined leadership to the nation: instead, he saw political dissent, which he had muzzled in the country at large, resurface within his own party. As the workers turned their backs on the Communists and the peasants rebelled, staying in power required unremitting resort to police measures. The regime's freedom of action was increasingly impeded by a bloated and corrupt bureaucracy. The voluntary union of nations turned into an oppressive empire. Lenin's speeches and writings of the last two years reveal, besides a striking paucity of constructive ideas, barely controlled rage at his political and economic impotence: even terror proved useless in overcoming the ingrained habits of an ancient nation. Mussolini, whose early political career closely resembled Lenin's and who even as a Fascist dictator observed the Communist regime with sympathy, concluded as early as July 1920 that bolshevism, a "vast, terrible experiment," had miscarried:

> Lenin is an artist who worked on humans as other artists work on marble or metal. But human beings are harder than granite and less malleable than iron. No masterwork has emerged. The artist has failed. The task has proven beyond his powers.

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Seven decades and tens of millions of victims later, Lenin's and Stalin's successor as head of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, conceded as much in an address to the American Congress:

> The world can sigh in relief. The idol of Communism which spread everywhere social strife, animosity, and unparalleled brutality, which instilled fear in humanity, has collapsed. It has collapsed, never to rise again.

Failure was inevitable and imbedded in the very premises of the Communist regime. Bolshevism was the most audacious attempt in history to subject the entire life of a country to a master plan, to rationalize everybody and everything. It sought to sweep aside as useless rubbish the wisdom that mankind had accumulated over millennia. In that sense, it was a unique effort to apply science to human affairs: and it was pursued with the zeal characteristic of that breed of intellectuals who regard resistance to their ideas as proof of their soundness. Communism failed because it proceeded from the erroneous doctrine of the Enlightenment, perhaps the most pernicious idea in the history of thought, that man is merely a material compound, devoid of either soul or innate ideas, and as such a passive product of an infinitely malleable social environment. This doctrine made it possible for people with personal frustrations to project them onto society and attempt to resolve them there rather than in themselves. As experience has confirmed time and again, man is not an inanimate object but a creature with his own aspirations and will—not a mechanical but a biological entity. Even if subjected to the fiercest dressage, he cannot pass on the lessons he has been forced to learn to his children, who come into this world ever fresh asking questions that are supposed to have been answered once and for all. To demonstrate this commonsensical truth required tens of millions of dead, incalculable suffering for the survivors, and the ruin of a great nation.

The question of how such a flawed regime succeeded in maintaining itself in power for so long certainly cannot be met with the answer that, whatever we may think of it, it had the support of its own people. Anyone who explains the durability of a government not based on an explicit mandate of its citizens by its alleged popularity must apply the same rationale to every other enduring authoritarian regime, including tsarism—which survived not seven decades but seven centuries—and then still face the unenviable task of having to explain how tsarism, presumably so popular, collapsed in a matter of days.

In addition to demonstrating the inapplicability of scientific methods to the conduct of human affairs, the Russian Revolution has raised the profoundest moral question about the nature of politics—namely, the right of governments to try to remake human beings and

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refashion society without their mandate and even against their will: the legitimacy of the early Communist slogan, "We will drive mankind to happiness by force!" Gorky, who knew Lenin intimately, agreed with Mussolini that he regarded human beings as a metalworker regards ore. His was but an extreme expression of an attitude common to radical intellectuals everywhere. It runs contrary to the morally superior as well as more realistic principle of Kant's that man must never be used as merely means for the ends of others, but must always be regarded also as an end in himself. Seen from this vantage point, the excesses of the Bolsheviks, their readiness to sacrifice countless lives for their own purposes, were a monstrous violation of both ethics and common sense. They ignored the fact that the means—the well-being and even the lives of people—are very real, whereas the ends are always nebulous and often unattainable. The moral principle that applies in this case has been formulated by Karl Popper: "Everyone has the right to sacrifice himself for a cause he deems deserving. No one has the right to sacrifice others or to incite others to sacrifice themselves for an ideal."

Hippolyte Taine drew from his monumental study of the French Revolution a lesson that he himself described as "puerile"—that "human society, especially a modern society, is a vast and complicated thing." One is tempted to supplement this observation with a corollary: precisely because modern society is so "vast and complicated" and therefore so difficult to grasp, it is neither proper nor feasible to impose on it patterns of conduct, let alone try to remake it. What cannot be comprehended cannot be controlled. The tragic and sordid history of the Russian Revolution—such as it really was, not as it appears to the imagination of those foreign intellectuals for whom it was a noble attempt to elevate mankind—teaches that political authority must never be employed for ideological ends. It is best to let people be. In the words attributed by Oscar Wilde to a Chinese sage: There is such a thing as leaving mankind alone—but there never was such a thing as governing mankind.

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Leopold Labedz

EDWARD SHILS

LEOPOLD LABEDZ, who died in March of last year, was the editor of *Survey: A Journal of East and West Studies.* He was a great editor and an incomparable repository of information about the world of Communism. He was also a man of indomitable courage with a wonderful sense of humor, who aroused the affections of many persons.

Leopold Labedz was about five feet, eight inches in height. He was as bald as a monk. His cheeks were pink without being florid; his broad brow was equally pink. He had bright blue eyes. His torso had the shape of a rugby football. His wrists and ankles were slender and trim. His shirt was always white and freshly laundered; his suit well pressed; his shoes perfectly shined. Wherever he went, he carried a heavy, inevitably overstuffed black briefcase, not at all shabby but a little the worse for always being jammed full of cuttings, books, papers, and manuscripts. He walked rapidly in rather short steps. He had a marvelously sweet grin, slightly mischievous, slightly embarrassed; as he grew older, the smile saddened.

Leopold was a brave, learned, tenacious, selfless, headstrong, witty, affectionate, excitable person, frequently indignant, sometimes aggrieved but, invariably, quickly reconciled and quickly, although not always, forgetting his grievances. He enjoyed being in restaurants until closing time. I am told that, when young, he was a good dancer and bridge player. He was extremely gregarious. It was almost as if, at all times, he had to be busily engaged in conversation or listening to the conversations of others, even the conversations of those who were not his interlocutors. He enjoyed the company of his close friends, he enjoyed almost as much the company of new and old acquaintances. He enjoyed talking and he enjoyed hearing others talk—if they had something worthwhile to say. He enjoyed especially talking with and listening to Eastern Europeans newly arrived in London.

He frequently returned to his house in East Finchley at about

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midnight and then sat up until about three or four o'clock in the morning, reading Central and Eastern European newspapers and periodicals. He must also have read many books in numerous languages in these early morning hours.

His house appeared to be rather tidy; newspapers were in neat piles; large, strong black plastic trash bags, which were filled to the top with newspaper cuttings, offprints, journals, etc., stood in a wide well-disciplined row about the wall of his drawing room. They gave a cold, funereal, but not disorderly tone to an otherwise conventionally furnished room that was also fairly full of upholstered furniture. There was nothing dusty or disheveled about the negotiable parts of the house.

Leopold was a zealous user of the Xerox machine. I often received copies of articles from very out-of-the-way journals, often articles of some years back, which he had mentioned in conversation and of which I had not been aware. His office at Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, where he usually arrived, perfectly groomed, cheeks shining, at about 3:00 P.M. and remained until about 8:30 p.m., also gave a relatively orderly impression. Periodicals, although many were piled on the floor and on tables and chairs, seemed to have had well-ordered places belonging to them on the shelves that covered all the walls up to the ceiling.

I think that at both of his seats, he was much helped—at the office, by the faithful and talented young women, often rather learned, who were his assistants, and at home by a legendary Polish woman whom I never saw, who looked after him efficiently, but perhaps with incessant scolding, about which he sometimes complained. The "Polish nanny" was of great help to him in raising his daughter.

Conversation in Leopold's home often required the support of some cutting or offprint. A search in one or another of the black plastic bags sometimes produced the desired item; at other times, the search ended in failure and a sad smile of resignation. I thought that it was remarkable that these searches were successful as often as they were, given the fact that the interior of the bags seemed to have been as chaotic as their exteriors were orderly. It was evidence of his memory that he was ever able to retrieve anything from those bags. At least one room on the ground floor of the house in East Finchley was so crammed, apparently with old newspapers, journals, and books, that he strictly forbade me ever to open its door, lest a cascade of papers pour out onto the floor beyond its threshold.

He was fastidious in his taste for food, as he was in dress, but more oddly so. He was, except for *pommes frites*, an almost unqualifiedly consistent enemy of vegetables. There was nothing ethical or prin-

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cipled about his aversion to vegetables. He would occasionally eat carrots if they had been cooked with a sufficiently large amount of sugar. Sometimes, when he ordered a beefsteak or an escallop in a restaurant, it might be served with a few flecks of parsley. These were, if not too numerous, painstakingly removed by Leopold with the care of a police inspector sifting dust at the scene of an explosion. Salads were of course very strictly refused. Tomatoes in the form of *salsa di pomodoro,* and in that form only, were accepted. In some of the best restaurants in Paris, where I sometimes used to dine with him, he ate only *entrecôte* and *pommes frites.*

Until the great change in his life caused by illness, he seldom had a meal at home. On rare—very rare—occasions he roasted a chicken; even more rarely he cooked some very sweetened carrots. As a beverage, he almost always drank a Diet Coke. I think that Diet Cokes replaced Cokes when he learned that he had diabetes. He never drank wine or spirits during the time I knew him.

II

The Leopold Labedz I have described here was the Leopold Labedz whom I first met in 1953 at the flat of Jane Degras. Jane Degras was a fiery, meticulous little woman who had once been a member of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, working on the Marx-Engels *Gesamtausgabe*; after she became anti-Communist as a result of her life in the Soviet Union, she was a member of the Soviet section of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) in St. James's Square and, more important, editorial assistant on *Survey* and the scourge of Leopold Labedz. In a way that combined affection and acrimony, Jane Degras was one of the sources of the relative regularity with which *Survey* appeared.

I saw Leopold frequently throughout the 1960s and 1970s. *Minerva,* the journal I have edited since 1961, began its life in Ilford House on the fourth floor, about fifty feet from Leopold's office. After we moved to Macmillans' near Temple Bar, I continued to see him frequently; in those days I went to London nearly every week and I often called on him in his office and on him and Melvin Lasky, in the evenings, when they were together in Lasky's room at *Encounter.* On some occasions he came to dine with me in Cambridge, once bringing Svetlana Stalin with him. He visited me a number of times in Chicago, staying at my flat for several days on each visit. There was always a great deal to talk about. He was a model of sweetness and courtesy when I had other guests, but when they left, usually around midnight, he would tell me for hours of his life from 1939 to 1942.

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His accounts were vivid and enthralling and so densely recounted that I could never interrupt him successfully to ask him to clarify certain points. It is on the basis of those accounts that the next part of my portrait of Leopold Labedz is based. Since I never was able to persuade him to write his autobiography, my account of his life is an impoverished and vague summary of the extraordinarily enchanting and horrifying things he told me in those early morning hours.

III

Leopold Labedz would have been a man of great civil courage, great learning, and penetrating understanding of international politics, as well as a charming, witty, selfless friend, whatever his earlier life had been. It was his nature to be that way. The sequence of cataclysmic and amusing—amusing only in retrospect—experiences that preceded his arrival in England in 1947 served as the rich stock on which a powerful intelligence and a precise memory could draw in their irrepressible exercise. He practically never referred to these experiences in his writings and he seldom dwelt on them in his conversations. Yet, when I seized the opportunity to encourage him, wonderful stories emerged. But only after midnight.

Readers of Leopold Labedz's writings will recall his two articles on Isaac Deutscher, a "critical" but faithful devotee of Stalin and a prominent spokesman of the critical pro-Stalinist and pro-Communist section of British intellectual opinion for a long succession of years after the Second World War. Leopold wrote about Deutscher in two articles, the second of which was delayed in publication by long consultations with libel lawyers. When Leopold wrote on any subject, he exhausted the sources. In one part of the long essay, which I read in manuscript, he referred to some poetry written by Deutscher in a short-lived Polish highbrow literary periodical of the second half of the 1930s. I asked him how he was able to obtain a copy of those poems in London. He said that he had not read them in London; he had read them in the Tashkent public library sometime in 1942. I asked him how he came to read them there, of all places. He told me.

But let me first reconstruct the main outline of Leopold Labedz's history before he came to London. He was born in Simbirsk—which was also the birthplace of Lenin and Kerensky—on January 22, 1920. His father was a physician in Warsaw, apparently of some eminence and success; his mother, who died when he was very small, was also a physician. Leopold studied in the Kreczmara Gymnasium with Leopold Tyrmand, the Polish émigré writer (Richard Pipes, professor of Russian history at Harvard, studied there four years afterward).

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Leopold matriculated at the University of Warsaw in 1937; I never learned anything about that period except for his reminiscence of the attacks on Jewish students at the University by anti-Semitic students. I think that he himself fought back. He did not make a point of saying explicitly that he had not "taken it lying down," but that is what I inferred.

In the late summer or autumn of 1938, Leopold went to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. He apparently studied medicine there but found time to read many French novels, to see many French films, and to hear Edith Piaf sing. He was already interested in the social sciences, and he read a bit of political philosophy. He seems to have had no plans for a career. (He never did.) It appears that he spent a lot of time in cafés, reading books and periodicals, not becoming closely attached to any one individual or group but generally happy to be in Paris, despite his certainty that war was going to break out. Just before it did he returned to Poland, seemingly for the summer vacation. Within the first weeks of the Soviet invasion of Eastern Poland, Leopold's father, who had probably been in the Polish military medical service, was taken by the Soviet army to act as chief physician of a relatively modern hospital in Eastern Poland. The hospital was reserved for patients who were very high-ranking officials of the Communist party of the Soviet Union who were in Poland to plan and carry out damaging acts against Poland. Leopold somehow gained an appointment as librarian of the hospital. His father's standing as chief physician apparently gave him immunity from the depredations of the Soviet NKVD. He himself had light duties.

True to himself, Leopold Labedz read books from the hospital library. He became especially friendly with one Russian, Aleksei Kapler, who had been a filmmaker but, more important, a speechwriter for Stalin. Kapler had fallen somewhat out of grace—by no means completely, because he was still a privileged Party member. Just what he was doing in Poland at that time is unclear. He was well enough to go for long walks with Leopold, then about twenty-one years old and fluent in Russian. Kapler unburdened his heart to Leopold in the course of long, almost daily, walks in the forest. He told Leopold a great deal about "life at the top." That was Leopold's first contact with the inside of the Kremlin. No scholar working on Soviet affairs, however knowing, ever had such a source of information about what went on so close to Stalin.

Once it became apparent that the Germans intended to move eastward in mid-1941, the hospital moved; it moved again and fairly often, and Leopold's father and Leopold moved with it. Conditions of life in the Soviet Union had begun to deteriorate severely as the

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German army advanced. Somehow Leopold became separated from his father.

There was apparently a period between Leopold's separation from his father and his joining the Polish forces when he was on his own. (I could never get a coherent account of this period from him or from his friends.) Even after he joined the Polish army early in 1942, he seems to have been on his own much of the time. The military unit to which he was assigned must have also moved repeatedly; it apparently had no regular roll call. The disaggregated body must have retained sufficient organization to provide some sort of meals even if only irregularly, but they were meals that Leopold could not eat since they contained no meat, but only vegetables. In the ensuing months, he became a scarecrow, falling in weight to about one hundred pounds. The Polish soldiers, and Leopold certainly, were kept to no discipline. They wandered about; if they saw a breadline, they joined it. Otherwise, they prowled about like living ghosts, eyes staring out of their heads, lice-infested, looking for crusts and scraps of discarded food.

Leopold had one advantage over his fellow soldiers. For them, a library was a place to sit down, a relatively warm and relatively clean place. For Leopold, a library was a place to read books. Leopold had discovered the Tashkent public library in his aimless, bedraggled wanderings, looking for food, hoping to find a place to rest. Seeing the library, a single dim light in a dusty lifeless scene, he went in. However disorderly it might have been within, it was a nearly divine order compared with the outside. Leopold began to order all sorts of books to be brought to him. After a time, the clerks refused to bring any more books for him. Where books were concerned, Leopold was even more ravenous than he was for meat. He was not one to accept refusals.

Weak though he was, Leopold could raise his voice. He demanded to see the head of the library. After some squabbling, he was ushered into that person's presence. The director was an oldish man, probably in his sixties, bent, thin, unsympathetic, his coldness of mien emphasized by his pince-nez. He was obviously a man who did not want any commotion around him. All else might be disregarded but not commotion. And here was Leopold, a creator of commotion. The librarian appeared to be a traditional Tsarist, and then Communist *tchinovnik*. The librarian weakened to the extent of asking Leopold why he wished to read so many books. Leopold told him what little there was to tell about his academic career. When Leopold mentioned his studies at the Sorbonne, the old librarian broke down. He too had studied in Paris before the First World War. He began to reminisce: it had been the happiest time of his life; he recalled streets

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and cafés and bookshops. He began to sob. Russia, when he returned, went to war; then came the succession of the revolution, the civil war, famines, epidemics, trials—it was all too much for him. He could not stand the turmoil, so he withdrew to what he thought would be the peace and quiet of the librarianship in Tashkent. But there was no escape from the cruel, dusty, broken treadmill of Soviet society. Recollections of Paris had brought before his mind reminders of a now-impossible happiness.

His recollections and sentiments about his time in Paris and his Parisian friends, which were separated from Leopold's own experiences by about sixteen years, aroused and animated what little was left of fellow feeling in his desiccated soul. Pulling himself together and resuming his position of authority, he told Leopold: "You will be free to read any books, periodicals, or papers in the library except *Pravda* or *Izvestia* from 1918 to 1920. Please do not ask for my permission to read those papers. It will be worth my life if I give you permission to see them. So, please do not ask me to allow you to do so." That is how Leopold came to read the works of Isaac Deutscher, the poetical apologist for Stalin, in the Tashkent public library.

This was only one incident among hundreds. Leopold was not a yarn spinner. He was not a person to speak about himself melodramatically. He spoke about himself only if led to it. But he had a great talent, helped by meticulous memory, for physical, physiognomic, and verbal details. Even in stories of which he was the central figure—which were those I was interested in—his interlocutors got as much or more attention and consideration than he. Had he been able to write it, Leopold might have left one of the best autobiographies of the century.

IV

When the war in Europe was over, Leopold knew that he would not go back to Poland. He knew too much about Communism and the Soviet Union to return to the certainty of a totalitarian society in Poland. He decided to accept the alternative of resettlement in Great Britain, offered by the Foreign Office to Polish soldiers who had fought under the British flag. Leopold did not rush to England, where he never had been. He spoke English very haltingly; indeed, he never lost his strong Polish accent when speaking or certain charming stylistic irregularities when writing.

After the war, Leopold spent some time at the University of Bologna. Some of his friends say that he studied medicine there. Other friends say that he studied law. Again, reading books was his main

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activity. He apparently did attend some lectures in political philosophy and jurisprudence, but I doubt whether he had professional ambitions. One piece of evidence that he studied law was the extraordinarily detailed and precise knowledge of Cesare Beccaria's *Dei delitti e delle pene* that he once adduced in an argument with Professor Leon Radzinowicz. The famous historian of criminal law was checkmated by Labedz's mastery of the professor's own bailiwick. I doubt whether he ever intended to become either a physician or a lawyer. Nor did he really think seriously of an academic career. For him, reading books was the highest good; it was never a means to some other end.

He arrived in London at the end of 1946, and in April of that year, Leopold became attached to the Polish Resettlement Corps. He therefore remained officially in the Polish army until April 1949. At the beginning of the 1950s, he became a student at the London School of Economics as a candidate for the degree of bachelor of science in economics with sociology as his special subject. He soon established a reputation for his wide knowledge, his delivery of endless disquisitions in tutorials, his very active participation in class discussions. He was always very respectful of his teachers, never overbearing towards his fellow students, who knew far less than he did. In his finals, he answered only one question, writing at great length; he did not write anything on the other questions. This perplexed his examiners. Some of them wished to give him a failing grade, and it was only the active intervention of Mrs. Jean Floud that gained him a II,2—in the second class of the second class.

It is not known whether he ever registered as a graduate student, but he spent much time at the LSE in seminars and he became known for his exceptional erudition and his amiable disposition. Leopold was a regular participant for many years in Leonard Schapiro's famous seminar on Soviet studies at the School. He was a regular attendant for about ten years, but I do not think that he was registered as a student after he received the bachelor's degree. It is from that seminar that his fame in London grew.

Whatever Leopold's status at the School, he was surely very much at home there. He knew all the main teachers, senior and junior; he studied all the books taught at the School in political science and sociology. Naturally, he read all the literature on the Soviet Union. He had a good, later well-remembered, knowledge of Pareto's *Trattato,* Weber's *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft,* and the other classics of modern social science; they do not seem to have deeply entered into his thought; they seemed more like acquisitions that he preserved and occasionally invoked but did not use.

Leopold was not interested in forming theories; his interest lay in

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gaining a clearer and more specific understanding of the Communist system. He had an intimate, very detailed knowledge of the history of Bolshevism and of the Soviet Union. His knowledge of the satellite Communist countries and of Communist parties in India and China, Italy, the United States, and elsewhere throughout the world was also very thorough, but he did not study these countries in the way in which he studied the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, he knew almost everything there was to be known about all of these Communist countries as well as about the Communist parties, socialist parties, and leftist intellectuals in Western Europe and the United States.

When China and the Soviet Union dissolved their alliance, Leopold—who had written very penetratingly from the very beginning on the separation between Communist China and the Soviet Union—became a favorite of certain officials, particularly the military attaché, of the Chinese embassy in London. He twice visited the People's Republic of China on the invitation of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. His overriding interest was in Communism in Europe.

Yet, with all the universally acknowledged thoroughness of Leopold's knowledge of the Communist regime in the Soviet Union and its satellites in Europe, it is difficult to say that he studied the Soviet Union in any conventional sense. It is difficult to imagine Leopold Labedz, sitting at a desk for hours and hours, in a library or at home, day after day. He always seemed to be in movement. When he was in his office at Ilford House, he was on the telephone much of the time. When the telephone calls were over and often while they were going on, he was engaged in conversation with visiting Poles, Czechs, and Eastern Europeans, or sometimes American academic students of the Soviet Union. Then, at about 8:30 P.M. he would rise and say that he had to be off. I think that he very seldom went home from his office. Instead, he frequently went directly to the *Encounter* office for a long jaw with its editor, Melvin Lasky; on other evenings he would go to a restaurant or a café to meet someone who knew a lot about Communism or from whom he could learn of that person's firsthand experience of Communism. Nevertheless, he did write long letters, sometimes by hand; he did read manuscripts and correspond with authors. He was also very familiar with books on contemporary politics and recent history in English, French, German, and Italian. So he must from time to time have sat quietly alone for prolonged periods. That must have been at intervals between periods of reading *Pravda, Tribuna Ludu, Rudy Pravo,* etc., between midnight, when he returned home to East Finchley, and 3:00 or 4:00 A.M., when he went to bed in a bedroom piled deeply with books.

The explanation of how he joined this busy, externally directed

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life to his highly differentiated and specific stock of knowledge must lie in the fantastic speed with which he read and his no less fantastic retentiveness. To this should be added his insatiable drive to absorb the content of any printed surface. Print at any angle drew him as by a magnet. When he came into a room to see a person seated at a paper- or book-littered desk, he read all that was open—upside down!

When Leopold and *Survey* took possession of each other, his range of reading narrowed from the breadth of all the years that preceded. He did not read so many novels. When he was younger—perhaps as a schoolboy in Poland, as a student in Paris, and as the collector of a private library when he was in the Polish forces in Italy—he read novels, philosophy, and, of course, history. (I think that he did not read books in religion; he had no religious sympathy.) His reading of novels must at one time have been as zealous as his reading of books on Communism was later. He was the only person I ever met—he himself, when I mentioned the book to him, observed the same from his side—who remembered *Silbermann* by Jacques de Lacretelle, a very modest novel written in the 1920s about a Jewish boy in a French school. But when the world became more serious, he read the writings of novelists only if they were in some way connected with politics and if their authors were—like Arthur Koestler, Manes Sperber, and Ignazio Silone—his friends or were fellow travelers on the other side.

This busyness of movement, reading, and talking was one feature of Leopold's life in London, interrupted by quite frequent short journeys to Paris, Berlin, Rome, Stockholm. The talk and movement were addressed to several concentric circles of individuals. At the very center were Walter Laqueur, Melvin Lasky, and Max Hayward, with the latter two becoming increasingly preponderant after 1965. Then there was a wider circle consisting of Lionel Bloch, David Floyd, and Marion Bieber. There was another circle, perhaps less frequently seen, less intimate but perhaps more esteemed than the others; Hugh Seton-Watson stood out among these. Beyond these circles were countless persons of all nationalities from whom he gained information, exchanged jokes, and pleased by his own amiability and intelligence. No one ever spoke ill of Leopold, not even Jane Degras, who admitted his virtues but who denounced him vehemently for his disregard of printers' deadlines.

V

I do not know what Leopold lived on between 1953 and the early 1960s, when he began to draw some income from the Congress for Cultural Freedom. It is possible that his father, now established in

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medical practice in London, supported him. I have the impression that in *Survey*'s first issues, when it was little more than a four-page newsletter about cultural developments in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin, it was largely the creation of Walter Laqueur, who throughout his life has shown an exceptional ability to conceive and to carry out original projects in an orderly manner. At that stage, Leopold was Walter's assistant. When *Survey* became a thick, exceptionally informative quarterly on Communist affairs, Leopold, on Walter Laqueur's recommendation, became his co-editor.

I think that they did not always get on well together. Walter, who was a methodical and punctual worker, able to lay out a plan and to carry it out in an efficient, even if deceptively effortless, manner, was vexed by Leopold's unpunctuality and unwillingness to allow any manuscript to leave his hands.

Eventually the problem was resolved by Walter Laqueur's acceptance of more and more responsibilities. In addition to his unceasing production of solid scholarly books on important contemporary themes, he became director of the Wiener Library—the great private library of books and journals about Nazi Germany, Jews, and contemporary European history—as well as the editor of the *Journal of Contemporary History*. It was inevitable that he should reduce his obligations to *Survey*. Leopold then came into his own as the sole editor.

It was the beginning of the greatest period of Leopold's life. Although *Survey* was never an elegantly edited magazine—it was not a work of typographical beauty—it was a masterly editorial achievement. Leopold's universal knowledge of Communism in theory and practice, past and present, and his firsthand knowledge of the entire cosmos of scholarly work bearing on Communism, and of all those who did that work, gave him superb qualifications for the editorial role. The growing fame of *Survey*, and Leopold's acknowledged mastery of his subject, his personal charm and transparent integrity, as well as his genuinely friendly disposition, made available to him a reservoir of authors such as few journals could command. His contact with Eastern Europeans also made available to him articles and documents, the publication of which added to the great merit of *Survey*.

In Great Britain, the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defense did not indicate any awareness of Leopold's existence, or, if they did, he and they communicated so secretly that one never heard of it. The situation was different in the United States. The United States Department of State was as indifferent to Leopold as was its British opposite number. But in Washington, thanks to his friendship with Richard Perle, at that time an adviser to the late Senator Henry Jackson, and with other influential persons, his knowledge and counsel were much

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appreciated. Senator Henry Jackson had Leopold testify before the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee; his testimony was spectacular. (He appeared together with Robert Conquest and Bernard Lewis.) He became a good friend and confidante of General Edward Rowny, who was a very important figure in the United States Disarmament Agency, and he continued to see and to be appreciated by—and to appreciate equally—Richard Perle when he was Assistant Secretary of Defense.

In the late 1960s, and through the 1970s and into the early 1980s, *Survey* was at its height and so was Leopold. A brilliant article by Bernard Levin in *The Times* (London) on Leopold was only one among other public testimonials to the achievement of *Survey*. Levin referred to him as, in appearance, an "Eastern European Mr Pickwick"; it was a happy notion and Leopold was pleased by it.

Leopold was an outstanding raconteur. His capacity for mimicry and re-enactment, his sense for details, were at a high point in his anecdotes. He was especially good in anecdotes about the boorishness and stupidity of the police—the militia—in Communist Poland. He was a treasure-house of the questions and answers of Radio Erevan, a mythical broadcasting station in Armenia. But he was not limited to these. Amusing stories like those of the interview between the shades of Brezhnev and Tsar Nicholas II in the next world, or of the visit of General Jaruzelski to Lenin's tomb to seek Lenin's guidance about how to deal with Solidarnòcs, appeared in a steady flow. Where they came from, I do not know; Leopold had such a large supply that he never repeated himself. And they were never part of a self-exhibition. They were an additional reason why his company gave so much pleasure.

VI

When the Soviet novelist M. A. Sholokhov was to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for 1965, Leopold, despite very severe illness, traveled to Stockholm with Mark Bonham-Carter, and, in collaboration with David Carver of International PEN, he organized a huge manifestation on behalf of Yuli Daniel and Andrei Sinyavsky, the two Russian dissident writers who had been arrested in the Soviet Union. It received much attention in the press and surely helped to restrain many Western intellectuals from following their traditional inclination to swallow the Soviet line.

On another occasion, when the Helsinki group met to discuss the "third basket," Leopold was there. He represented no one officially, and he was excluded from the meetings. But he could attend the press conferences. The Soviet delegate was pleased to declare very

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aggressively that the Soviet Union adhered in every respect and in all details to the Helsinki agreement. This was Leopold's opportunity. He took the floor, addressing the Soviet spokesman very insistently. He asked why the Soviet Union, if it conforms so completely to the agreement, refuses to allow into the country harmless French and German magazines—and he rattled off the names of a number of them that were similar to *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping.* The Soviet spokesman denied that they were refused entrance. He became heated; Leopold, knowing he had the upper hand, remained calm. He went on asking about other obscure and harmless journals. Then he asked, "And why do you ban *Mécanique populaire?*" (A French equivalent of *Popular Mechanics.*) The Soviet representative became loudly abusive. Leopold calmly held up for the gathering to see the official Soviet list of publications that were denied entry to the Soviet Union. He made it clear that his queries came from that list. His adversary was very disconcerted.

How did Leopold come to have that list? It was given him by a friendly Polish, nominally Communist, official, who had been provided with the list to guide Polish Communist censors. Leopold often got such documents. He got them because he was a presence in Eastern Europe, although he was not allowed to set foot there. Decent Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, who served the Communist regimes half-heartedly, knew that they had an ally in Leopold.

He also had time for smaller matters. Once a colleague of mine in Cambridge told me of a young Austrian woman, who, when she was an employee in the cultural section of the Austrian embassy in Moscow, had fallen in love with a young Russian. They wished to marry and to take up residence in Austria. But this could not be done because the Soviet government would not allow him to leave unless they were married and it would not allow her to return to Moscow as she had to do in order to marry her fiancé. (She had gone back to Austria on leave and, before her departure, had been given a visa to return by the Soviet authorities, who had then refused to honor their own visa.)

I told Leopold about the case and arranged for the young woman to visit him. A short time later, Leopold called a press conference. Such was his reputation that, when he called a press conference, the leading correspondents of the British and Continental press in London came, knowing that they would learn something to their advantage. The case was laid before them; they wrote about it in their respective papers, and before very long the Soviet embassy in Vienna informed the young woman that her visa had been re-validated and that she was free to return to the Soviet Union to marry her fiancé.

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But not everything went Leopold's way even at the height of his glories. There were times when the financial straits of *Survey* were very narrow. This depressed Leopold. Nevertheless, the journal survived various financial crises, thanks to the recurrent support of various American foundations, most notably the Heritage Foundation. The financial straits were made slightly more bearable by the fact that Leopold was never one to follow his own financial matters with a zealous eye. I doubt whether he ever really knew the facts of the financial situation of *Survey*, any more than he knew about his own finances. These were things that he preferred not to think about. I had heard that he did not always deposit his salary checks; he certainly knew very little about his income-tax liabilities.

There were undoubtedly moments of anxiety about financial matters, but these were things about which Leopold was never straightforward with others or perhaps even himself. To offset these more or less private anxieties were his obvious pleasure in the development of his daughter Natalie into a charming and indeed beautiful young woman and her choice of a career of caring for and restoring works of art, as well as her marriage to an admirable young astrophysicist, who was always tender and solicitous to Leopold in his hard times.

In a sense Leopold, apart from his care for Natalie, had no private life. I have the impression that his intellectual friends and close acquaintances were persons who were engaged in the great collective task of trying to improve the weak civility of the intellectuals of Western countries and to overcome their reluctance to accept a more truthful understanding of the dangers of Communism to liberal democratic society. All of Leopold's friends were located within the boundaries of this common intention. He also had Polish friends. There was no overlap of these two circles. His personal affections and loyalties lay within those boundaries.

VII

Leopold was never one to care for his health. He could not have combined care for his own health with his agitated dashing about, his failure to eat regularly or properly, his frenetic studies, and his sometimes desperately improvised, because inevitably belated, editorial work. Of course, I do not know whether a more orderly life and better nutrition would have forestalled the coming and the progress of Leopold's diabetes.

I knew that Leopold suffered from circulatory disorders, but he was the very opposite of a hypochondriac and he did not complain. Even towards the very end of his life in the middle of March, just

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about a week before he died, when I asked him how he felt, he said, "Not too bad," with an air of melancholy and cheerfulness. He never dwelt, at least in speaking with me, on his physical difficulties, even after both his legs were amputated. Before the gangrene set in on the toes of his right foot, he only very rarely complained about the pains in his legs. Once in Geneva in 1985, and once in Chicago several years later, he asked me to stop while we were walking until the pain in his legs passed. He might have been under medical care in those years, but it was practically impossible to find out from him whether this was so.

On one occasion, about twenty years earlier, when he was driving me from Konstanz to the airport, he momentarily lost control of the car; it swerved, and he brought it to an abrupt halt on the side of the road. He must have had a slight stroke or heart attack. He rested for about five minutes. When I insisted that we should not continue but should take a taxi back to Konstanz, he would not hear of it. In later years, he insistently denied that such an incident had ever occurred.

The obstinacy with which Leopold resisted vegetables was no less strong than his reluctance to seek medical advice and assistance. His consent to the first amputation was given only after long arguments with physicians and friends during which his condition grew worse and the necessary magnitude of the amputation increased.

Likewise, he was very obstinate about the course of physiotherapy that might have enabled him, after his first amputation, to walk with an artificial leg. He, according to one of our common friends, misdirected the artificial limb that had been fitted for him, when it needed adjustment; the same person was convinced that Leopold would resist all efforts to teach him to walk with the artificial limb; and she was right. The question was rendered irrelevant when gangrene appeared in the toes of his other foot. Once he had to undergo a second amputation, the matter of walking on two artificial limbs was never raised.

Yet it must be said that Leopold adapted himself to his new circumstances with extraordinary fortitude; he did not complain about his misfortune. There was never any self-pity. To be legless was simply another hard fact of life to which he had to reconcile himself. He never uttered a word of complaint.

While he was in the hospital after the first amputation, another major catastrophe descended on him. As a result of broken water pipes, his house in East Finchley became flooded. His newspapers, journals, and books were severely damaged. Much had to be discarded. After he sustained that loss, no further trouble could have crushed him.

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VIII

Leopold Labedz could not have lived in any other way than he did. He would have to have been a rather different sort of person, one less charming, less endearing, less exasperating, less merry, and less sad in order to meet the requirements of a more healthful regime or a more normal schedule of eating, sleeping, working. He would have been very unlike the Leopold Labedz his friends knew and loved, who impressed us with his unceasing flow of knowledge and his uncalculating selflessness and civil courage and who exasperated us by his obstinacy, and then by his distress, usually about small points.

But that is the way he was. The misfortunes that marked the last years of his life and that changed its external pattern—his rushing about, his endless readiness for conversation, his omnivorous appetite for more knowledge—shook him but they did not derail him.

The last few years of Leopold's life were very painful for him and for his friends. He lived in a nominally "sheltered flat" in a pleasant district in Ealing. It was a rather pleasant flat, very light and with a not unpleasant view of rooftops and trees. It was spacious enough. It had at least two good-sized rooms and a very adequate, thoroughly modern kitchen. The building had a "warden," and a woman "did for him" daily—as well as she could among the growing towers of Eastern European newspapers.

He seemed to be very satisfied with his arrangement in the "sheltered flat." He moved about in a wheelchair, bathed himself, and for much of his period of disablement, prepared his own meals in a microwave oven—mostly sausages, "chips," and pasta—and his inevitable Diet Cokes.

At first, characteristically, Leopold rebuffed the suggestion that he receive lunches and dinners from "meals on wheels." After a time, he began to refer with evident satisfaction to the service, although he had to resign himself to receiving cooked vegetables, which he had repeatedly asked to be withheld from the plate on which the meat dish that he had requested was delivered.

The flat soon became crowded with newspapers; in addition to two or three British newspapers and the *International Herald-Tribune*, he received about a half-dozen Eastern European dailies. There were not many books. But much worse than the piles of newspapers in which nothing sought could be found, and the absence of the many books that he mined with such speed, was what he felt to be his isolation.

Leopold would not go out of the flat by himself, although the doors and the lift permitted him to do so. He received fewer visitors than he wished because of the rather arduous journey from Central

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London to Ealing by underground and then the half-mile walk to his residence. Several of his Polish friends were very faithful to him and came fairly regularly. In the past few years, I myself found it increasingly difficult to travel to London from Cambridge, to walk long distances in the underground and up many flights of stairs at Ealing station. I spoke to him several times a week when I was in Cambridge; the calls usually were for about twenty minutes at a time. Often, when I telephoned, the line was busy. Leopold, in all his painful experience of isolation, was seldom out of the reach of someone else's voice.

On two occasions he traveled to Poland, where he was jubilantly received. On one occasion he even traveled to the United States. On several occasions, he traveled to Rusper in the Sussex countryside to visit his friend Melvin Lasky, but for most of the time, he stayed within the increasingly congested flat.

After *Survey* ceased publication, the flow of periodicals, American and Continental, which had been the line of life for him, was suspended. It was a crushing injury to him; it should never have been done. He received practically no new books. This was a terrible loss to one who used to peruse about twenty books a week. Then a kind friend arranged for the home delivery service of the Ealing public library to bring books to him and to collect them when he was finished. He was as happy as a lark. This offered the prospect of an approximation to his earlier life. Alas, he died only about a month after the delivery of books began.

Leopold had from time to time thought that he could continue to edit *Survey* once he recovered from his second amputation. For a variety of reasons, this proved to be impracticable. For one thing, the patrons who had supported the journal ceased to be willing to do so; it seems that the broken schedule was not acceptable to them. Furthermore, no preparations had been made for Labedz to continue his editorial work from his flat once the offices at Ilford House had been given up. He had no assistants since there was no money to pay them.

I am not sure how to assess the effect on Leopold of the breakdown of the Communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe. He knew the truth about their failures and weakness better than anyone alive. Yet he did not expect them to abdicate as they did.

Several years before, he and I attended a large symposium in Geneva entitled "The Future of Communism." It was organized by Professor Alexander Stroumas, who insisted that only a short life awaited the Communist regimes before they collapsed. I was skeptical. Leopold was more than skeptical. He thought that the Communist rulers of those countries, although they believed not at all in Marxism or Communism, would not renounce their privileges and would not

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hesitate to use the powers of coercion at their disposal to hold what they had. Yet, it must be said in Leopold's favor that it was he who helped more than anyone else to make widely known Almarik's views as he put them forward in *Can the Soviet Union Survive 1984?*

Yet, when the abdication occurred, Leopold admitted to being surprised. His fascination continued unabated, but, unusually for him, he admitted that he was uncertain about exactly what was happening and what might happen next. His flexibility of mind in the face of these unwonted developments was very gratifying to me.

IX

Leopold Labedz lived most of his adult life in public—in seminars, colloquia, symposia, press conferences, and in discussions over lunch and dinner. He never spoke about himself but only about one aspect or another of the Cold War. He was a Cold Warrior—among intellectuals, one of the best—and he was not apologetic about it. He had been a severe critic of détente, which he correctly saw to be a one-sided affair. He was not one of those who thought that the Cold War was over and won. He thought that the denial of the existence of the Cold War was a naïve or cowardly act. He denounced those who promoted or refused to resist the growth or influence of the Communist idea and of Communism as practiced in Eastern Europe—in the Soviet Union and in the "peoples' democracies." With Raymond Aron, Ignazio Silone, Robert Conquest, Sidney Hook, Arthur Koestler, Melvin Lasky, and others of that circle, he was a hero of the Cold War, to whom we all owe a debt.

He had a private side, too, but he did not attend to it. He was not given to self-analysis, and if he even engaged in it, he never spoke to his friends—certainly not to me—about what he discovered. He seldom allowed anyone to see what he thought should be kept private. But he did have a private life. From 1989 onward—perhaps even from an earlier date—his life was a tale of acute suffering. Even in his best times from the 1960s to the 1980s, he concealed his grief or made little of it when it became patent to others.

Sometimes when I thought of Leopold, I thought of a small, delicate boy, brought up in a refined household, treated by his family with the utmost consideration and yet deeply sensitive, not only where things of the intellect were concerned but also in matters of sentiment. From 1939 onward, Leopold Labedz had a very hard life—not the kind of life to which he was brought up. Things were never as bad as they were from 1940 to 1942 when he entered Iran with the Polish army, but they were hard nonetheless. In some respects, the Italian

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campaign of the Second World War was the best part of his life. After that he was an exile who had to fend for himself. Although he was treated very generously by a small band of good friends—among them Michael Josselson, Melvin Lasky, Walter Laqueur, and Lionel Bloch—and received much esteem from the 1960s to the 1980s, there were always thorns in his soul. I do not know what could have eased his pain. But pain it certainly was.

Leopold Labedz's achievements of civil courage and lucid intelligence were brought off in the face of this pain. All the more reason, therefore, why I, for one, shall always think of him with profound gratitude.

Hidden Meadow

PETER FILKINS

Moss phlox. Cinquefoil. Bluet. Avens.
Sheep sorrel. Hawkweed. Dense blazing star.
All the way across wildflowers kept me
afloat and sailing, lost

in a dream of equilibrium, the landscape
liquid, yet intractable as glacial drift;
the meadow's polyglot surface swimming up.
Rose-pink. Forget-me-not.

✪ PETER FILKINS teaches English at Simon's Rock College. His poems and criticism have appeared in the *New Criterion* and *Partisan Review.*

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False Discoveries

(*for Jean Charlot*)

ERLAND ANDERSON

On a poster I brought back from France,
a French artist has sketched
a bearded Lilliputian Columbus
in ruffled collar and tight-laced pants,
and a native Giantess, not yet Rigoberta Menchú—
nude, voluptuous, supinely well fed, asleep—
just at the moment
of the little man's arrival.

She is a continent, outstretched beyond
Gauguin's encounters in Tahiti.
She is holding horns of plenty
and must be pleasantly absorbed
in her nightly dreams.

He is standing atop
the upheld palm of her right hand,
claiming it with unfurled flag
for his queen in Spain,
taking it for an island east of India—
this little Don Quixote
smiling madly up to the Heavens,
he, too, in dreams, though more dangerous,
with hollow-eyed waking,
never seeming to imagine
that in looking down,
he might make a discovery
that would cause a new world to shake.

The physical union of this unlikely couple
seems doomed to prolonged frustration.

✪ ERLAND ANDERSON, Professor of English at Southern Oregon State College, is the author of three books of poems, *Searching for Modesto, A Hollow of Waves,* and *Piedras.*

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From Natchez to Mobile, From Memphis to St. Joe

WILLIAM ZINSSER

When I think of popular songwriters who evoke an image of America, I don't think of the usual musical theater giants—the urban and urbane George and Ira Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Rodgers and Hart, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, or Stephen Sondheim. I think of two country boys from Indiana and Savannah and a cantor's son from Buffalo: Hoagy Carmichael, Johnny Mercer, and Harold Arlen.

Play me a Hoagy Carmichael song and I hear the banging of a screen door and the whine of an outboard motor on a lake—sounds of summer in a small-town America that is long gone but still longed for. Often the imagery starts with the title. It may be the name of a place ("Memphis in June," "Can't Get Indiana Off My Mind," "Georgia on My Mind," "New Orleans"), or an evocative setting ("Riverboat Shuffle," "Rockin' Chair"), or a bird ("Skylark"), or flower ("Blue Orchids"), or an attribute of nature ("Stardust," "Moonburn," "Ole Buttermilk Sky"), or a bucolic moment ("Watermelon Weather," "One Morning in May," "In the Cool Cool Cool of the Evening"), or an allusion to the easy life ("Lazybones," "Lazy River"). Whatever it is, it invites us into an agreeable world. There's no winter in these songs—they're not called "Memphis in March" or "One Morning in February." The moon and the stars are out and working, birds are just a tree away, and the evenings are cool, not Midwest-hot.

✪ WILLIAM ZINSSER is the author of, among other books, *On Writing Well, Writing to Learn*, and, most recently, *American Places.*

Up a lazy river by the old mill run,
That lazy, lazy river in the noonday sun.
Linger in the shade of a kind old tree,
Throw away your troubles, dream a dream with me.
Up a lazy river where the robin's song
Awakes a bright new morning, we can loaf along.
Blue skies up above, ev'ryone's in love,
Up a lazy river, how happy you can be . . .

That's one of Carmichael's own lyrics, and it's a perfect product of the innocent America he grew up in—a classic of escapism. If the noonday sun is too hot, you have not only a tree to linger in the shade of, but a kind old tree. If troubles come, throw 'em away and listen to Mr. Robin. For good measure, the lyric has a generous helping of words beginning with *l*, those well-known inducers of languor and lassitude. We get five *lazy*'s, one *linger*, one *loaf*, and one *love*. If the song had a second chorus, a lark would sing a lullaby.

Hoagy's people don't get indoors much. At the nearest (as in this lyric by Paul Francis Webster) they sit on the porch, "watchin' the neighbors go by" and keeping an eye out for the moon:

Memphis in June, a shady veranda
Under a Sunday blue sky.
Memphis in June, and cousin Amanda's
Makin' a rhubarb pie . . .
Memphis in June, with sweet oleander
Blowing perfume in the air;
Up jumps a moon, to make it that much grander . . .

I don't know what oleander smells like, but it sounds as if it smells as sweet as wisteria and

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honeysuckle. I also don't know what a buttermilk sky looks like, but, again, it sounds pretty. "What's the good word tonight? Are you gonna be mellow tonight?" the singer asks the buttermilk sky, beseeching it to "keep a-brushing those clouds from sight" when he pops the question to his girl:

Don't you fail me when I'm needing you most.
Hang a moon above her hitching post;
Hitch me to the one I love.

Much is expected of the moon and the stars in Carmichael's songs. "Moonburn," which begins "I'm gonna get a moonburn when I'm with you tonight," explains that when "the glowing stars up above me . . . flash the words that you love me, it [the moon] will warm my heart." The moon is also what means home to a departed Hoosier. "I long for that moon country, that 'possum and 'coon country, that sycamore heaven back South," says the lyric of "Moon Country," making no mention of animals that are up and about during the day, and in "Can't Get Indiana Off My Mind" the force that "calls me back home, anywhere I chance to roam" is "the moonlight on the Wabash that I left behind."

Magical words: *moonlight, Wabash, sycamore, 'possum, oleander, rhubarb, veranda, buttermilk, robin, old mill.* Their imagery reaches us not only through the eye, ear, and nose but through two even more powerful transmitters: memory and longing. Today the urge to return to a simpler America has been coded into our architecture, especially our upscale shopping malls, with their turn-of-the-century storefronts and decor, telling us that yesteryear was America's golden age. Hoagy Carmichael's Indiana is part of that wishful American geography.

But the yearnings that his songs arouse come only partly from the lyrics. His melodies tug on the same nostalgia. They're not like anybody else's melodies. They are wanderers, itinerant as a hobo, in no hurry to arrive. There's no big-city tension in them. Partly that's because they have almost no repeated notes. The melody of "Lazy River" is as lazy as the river. Its first eight bars are full of curves and bends, and the next eight bars repeat the curving pattern without actually repeating the notes, just as different stretches of a river look alike without being alike. Equally meandering, the melody of "Can't Get Indiana Off My Mind" has a rural feeling. It wouldn't work if the words said "can't get New York City off my mind."

By contrast, the melodies of such urban songwriters as George Gershwin take much of their energy from repeated notes. Listen to such early Gershwin songs as "That Certain Feeling" and you hear the brittle rhythms of a young man who also came of age in the 1920s, like Hoagy Carmichael. But Gershwin's ear was tuned to the immigrant beat of Manhattan and the tempos of the new industrial age. Even when his ballads became more lyrical in the mid-1930s, near the end of his short life, they retained an insistence that was highly cosmopolitan. "They Can't Take That Away From Me" and "A Foggy Day" are the love songs of a debonair suitor, taking their emotion from their repetitive clusters and nervous melodic jumps. It's angular music; no curving rivers come to mind. When "A Foggy Day" declares, "I viewed the morning with alarm, the British Museum had lost its charm"—one of Ira Gershwin's most engaging couplets—the words have a ruefulness because of the repeated notes, not unlike many of Cole Porter's ballads, such as "Just One of Those Things."

Cole Porter also happened to be from Indiana, but he was no gazer at the moonlight on the Wabash or fancier of Cousin Amanda's rhubarb pies. Born into a rich family, he went East to Yale, became a habitué of New York and the Riviera, and wrote a body of theater songs ("You're the Top," "I Get a Kick Out of You") that defined for his generation what it meant to be "sophisticated." Rhythmically, his songs carry tremendous punch, hitting us with short bursts of melody ("So In Love," "It's All Right With Me") that make them an ideal beat for society dance bands.

Other urban composers convey the same urgency. Vincent Youmans was a prince of the repeated note ("I Know That You Know"), Irving Berlin took vitality from it ("There's No Business Like Show Business"), and Richard Rodgers was no stranger to its romantic uses ("Where or When," "Falling in Love With Love"). Harold Arlen's "Come Rain or Come Shine" begins with the same note repeated thirteen times—nobody's idea of a melody—and Jule Styne's "Just in Time" is built on the

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alternation of two notes that are only a half-tone apart. Yet both are memorable, dynamic songs. What makes them work is that the chords change interestingly beneath the uninteresting melody; their harmony is their chief interest.

That's seldom true of Hoagy Carmichael. His melodies dictate one accompanying set of chords, the most obvious example being "Star Dust." Its opening phrase ("Sometimes I wonder why I spend each lonely night") descends and climbs back up mainly on the notes of the F major chord (the song is in the key of C) and therefore demands an F major chord underneath it, just as each subsequent phrase demands a specific chord: F minor ("dreaming of a song"), C major ("the melody"), E minor ("haunts my reve-"), A major ("-rie"), etc. Unlike the melodies of, say, Gershwin or Rodgers or Arlen, which delight jazz pianists because they invite variant harmonies, Carmichael's tunes usually don't welcome improvisation because they have the quality of a jazz improvisation themselves. Where a Gershwin song sounds constructed ("The Man I Love"), or a Rodgers song ("My Funny Valentine"), or a Berlin song ("How Deep Is the Ocean?"), Carmichael's melodies sound spontaneous and intuitive, like the riff of a jazz instrumentalist. They could exist as instrumental solos without any harmony at all.

How those long lines got into his ear is no mystery. His first important influence was the young jazz cornetist from nearby Iowa, Bix Beiderbecke, whom he met in the early 1920s when he was going to college and law school at the University of Indiana. Another early influence was Louis Armstrong, whose trumpet he first heard in 1924. He also listened to the jazz that was famously coming up the river from New Orleans to Chicago, and in the late 1920s he began to associate as a singer and pianist with the great jazzmen, among them "King" Oliver, the Dorsey brothers, Benny Goodman, and Jack Teagarden, who were creating a new American sound, assisted by the fast-growing infant called radio.

Thus when we hear a Hoagy Carmichael song we hear music that brings back an idealized moment in the American past, the tag end of the era when the nation was predominantly rural, and its perfect icon is "Star Dust," the most recorded of all popular songs; at last count, there were 1,300 versions in forty languages. Composed as an up-tempo piano solo in 1927, it languished until it was set to words in 1929 by Mitchell Parish and recorded in 1930 by the bandleader Isham Jones, who slowed it down and caught its soul. Nevertheless its success defied the canons of public acceptance. As Alec Wilder notes in his classic *American Popular Song*, "Star Dust" is "very far out for a pop song of any era . . . and absolutely phenomenal for 1929."

Its lyrics, though skillful, aren't much help; they could be in any of the thirty-nine other languages the song has been recorded in. The only necessary information is that the song is about "star dust." Starting from that poet's image, the lyric throws in a carload of "poetic" words—night, reverie, love, kiss, garden wall, stars, nightingale, fairy tale, paradise, roses, dream, heart, memory—but the story doesn't go anywhere. The melody, on the other hand, has an inexorable logic; otherwise it wouldn't lodge itself so snugly in the brain.

Only in a few cases did Hoagy Carmichael work with a lyricist who bothered to create a narrative. Most of his songs just express a general state. Georgia is on their mind, or they can't get Indiana *off* their mind, or they know of a lazy river. But nobody actually visits those places; Hoagy's people are receivers, not doers. They receive dust from the stars, burn from the moon, fairy tales from the nightingale, and help from the buttermilk sky.

Two lyricists, however, brought humor and humanity to his songs. Frank Loesser, who in another decade would write the brilliant Broadway score *Guys and Dolls*, caught the eternal lovers' quandary of "Two Sleepy People," who are "too much in love to say goodnight," and in "Small Fry" he gently ribbed the tendency of elders to chide uppity youth ("My! My! Put down that cigarette; you ain't a grown-up, high and mighty yet"). But it was Johnny Mercer who wrote the words for Hoagy Carmichael's best song ("Skylark"), his most characteristic song ("Lazybones"), and his most exuberant song ("In the Cool Cool Cool of the Evening").

"Skylark" is Carmichael at the top of his mature form. Its lilting main theme, both graceful and confident, is heightened by lyrics that have all the right down-home images ("meadow," "mist," "valley," "spring," "blos-

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som," "lane"), and its intricate release, making two changes of key in eight bars, is a model of freshness and surprise. Mercer's accompanying words are just right:

And in your lonely flight,
Haven't you heard the music of the night?
Wonderful music, faint as a will-o'-the-wisp,
Crazy as a loon,
Sad as a gypsy serenading the moon.

"Lazybones" has a melody and a gait so easy-going that they almost compel us to lie down, and Mercer's mildly chastising lyric ("Never get your day's work done, sleepin' in the noonday sun") loses its rebuke altogether in the droll release:

When 'taters need sprayin'
I'll bet you keep prayin'
The bugs fall off of the vine.
And when you go fishin'
I bet you keep wishin'
The fish won't grab at your line . . .

The whole thing ends with a postscript on the futility of trying to preach to anyone sleeping in the noonday sun: "Well, looky here, he never heard a word I say!"

"In the Cool Cool Cool of the Evening," the last collaboration of the two country boys, which won Mercer his second Academy Award, is a flat-out ode to the anticipated pleasure of a small-town picnic. Its form is short and simple: an introduction that lists different folks' preferred eats ("Sue wants a barbecue, Sam wants to boil a ham . . ."), followed by a chorus expressing the singer's assurance that he wouldn't think of missing it ("tell 'em I'll be there"). The music and the lyrics are equally amiable, a summing up of the enjoyment that both Carmichael and Mercer took in their work and in the simple blessings of a simpler America.

Johnny Mercer is America's vernacular poet. He had a sure ear for local idiom, imagery, and slang. He was hip without being cute ("Goody Goody," "Bob White, Whatcha Gonna Swing Tonight?"), and he was endlessly versatile. Over a forty-five-year career, beginning in 1930, he wrote lyrics for many of America's finest songwriters, and in every case he matched and elevated what was distinctive about them. Here's a partial list:

Harold Arlen ("Blues in the Night," "One for My Baby," "That Old Black Magic"), Rube Bloom ("Day In, Day Out," "Fools Rush In"), Gene de Paul ("Namely You"), Walter Donaldson ("Mister Meadowlark"), Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn ("Satin Doll"), Gordon Jenkins ("P.S., I Love You"), Jerome Kern ("I'm Old-Fashioned," "Dearly Beloved"), Henry Mancini ("Moon River"), Victor Schertzinger ("I Remember You," "Tangerine," "Arthur Murray Taught Me Dancing in a Hurry"), Jimmy Van Heusen ("I Thought About You"), Harry Warren ("The Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe," "Jeepers Creepers," "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby"), and Richard Whiting ("Hooray for Hollywood," "Too Marvelous for Words"). Add all the songs for which Mercer wrote his own music ("Dream," "G.I. Jive," "I'm an Old Cowhand," "Jamboree Jones," "Something's Gotta Give") and the foreign hits that he wrote English words for ("Autumn Leaves," "When the World Was Young"), plus the movie themes that he fitted with lyrics and thereby brought to life ("Days of Wine and Roses," "Laura"). By itself David Raksin's *Laura* theme would survive only as background music for Clifton Webb's skulduggery on late-night TV. Instead a girl named Laura is somewhere in the memory of anyone who ever heard the song:

Laura is the face in the misty light,
Footsteps that you hear down the hall.
The laugh that floats on a summer night
That you can never quite recall.
And you see Laura on a train that is passing through,
Those eyes, how familiar they seem . . .

Country images and train images recur in Mercer's lyrics. Just the euphonious name of the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe Railroad inspired the rousing song that Judy Garland rousingly sang in *The Harvey Girls*, which won Mercer his first Oscar. (The third was for "Moon River.") Untypically, the song was about a daytime train, its passengers looking forward to a bed at Brown's Hotel, having traveled "for quite a spell, all the way from Philadelphi-ay, on the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe." Usually Mercer's trains run

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through the American night. Laura, glimpsed "on a train that is passing through," is surely a night rider, and the song "I Thought About You" takes place entirely in a Pullman sleeper. This seemingly simple lyric, set to Jimmy Van Heusen's tender melody, begins "I took a trip on the train" and goes on to enumerate various sights, seen out of the train window, that remind the singer of the person he or she has left behind and the times they spent together. The plain nouns with their potent imagery—*train, track, town, stop, lane, parked cars, stars, moon, stream*—carry all the pain of parting. They also remind us of what it was once like to travel in America. Who can't identify with this wonderful love song?

But although Mercer's roots were in Savannah, he was nobody's rube. Humor ran through his work, and it knocked off many a pretender, often with a sly nudge, as in the last line of the song about the South American siren Tangerine ("Oh, she's got them all on the run, but her heart belongs to just one, her heart belongs to Tangerine"), or in the song that begins: "Hooray for Hollywood! Where you're terrific if you're even good." He found gritty images when he needed them. The marvel of his lifelong achievement was that he could solve every problem and adapt to every kind of composer. I can't imagine anybody else putting a lyric to "Satin Doll." What the jazzmen Ellington and Strayhorn wrote was a series of short musical jabs—five syllables, three syllables, five syllables, three syllables—that gave a lyricist very little to work with. What Mercer wrote was:

Cigarette holder
Which wigs me
Over her shoulder
She digs me
Out cattin'
That satin doll.

Baby, shall we go
Out skippin'
Careful, amigo,
You're flippin'
Speaks Latin
That satin doll . . .

It's the ultimate jazz lyric. Yet the same man wrote the ultimate regional lyric, "Moon River," in slow waltz time, for Henry Mancini, Ellington's metabolic opposite:

. . . Two drifters,
Off to see the world,
There's such a lot of world
To see.
We're after the same
Rainbow's end,
Waitin' round the bend,
My huckleberry friend,
Moon River
And me.

I don't know what a huckleberry friend is, any more than I know what a buttermilk sky is, but I think it's the kind of friend I'd like to have, and I'm glad Mercer made it part of the American language.

Harold Arlen was the composer with whom Mercer consistently wrote his best lyrics, just as it was with Mercer that Arlen consistently did his best composing. They were from opposite points of the compass—one Northeastern Jewish, the other Southern Protestant—but the sound they created together was distinctively American. Arlen, the son of a cantor in Buffalo who improvised beautiful melodies to fit the texts that had no music, came to New York as a young band pianist and singer and was paired with the lyricist Ted Koehler.

So began a collaboration that yielded a string of hits for Harlem's Cotton Club revues in the early 1930s. Arlen obviously had an affinity for the African-American sensibility, not only in his blue songs like "Stormy Weather" and "Ill Wind," with their plaintive melodic line, but in his rhythmically jaunty hits like "I've Got the World on a String" and "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea." It was a fusion of Jewish and Negro elements, subconsciously tapping a shared heritage of suffering, which would be brought to its richest flowering several years later by George Gershwin in his folk opera *Porgy and Bess.* Compare the opening strain of Arlen's "Ill Wind" and Gershwin's "Bess, You Is My Woman Now."

I caught the Arlen bug at an early age when I heard the hit vocal he made of "Stormy Weather," in 1934, and his music has moved

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me more than that of any American songwriter ever since. What hooked me was the voice on the record. It was as high as a schoolboy's, but sad beyond a schoolboy's years, and, like "Stormy Weather" itself, it seemed to come from some older time and place. Many years later I was told a story by Robert Breen, director of the *Porgy and Bess* company that toured the world in 1955, which confirmed what I had felt.

One day when the troupe was in Cairo, Breen said, he went to a symphony concert featuring works by Mozart and Beethoven, which ended with a section called "American Folk Music." It turned out to be a suite built around five songs—"Stormy Weather," "Ill Wind," "I've Got a Right to Sing the Blues," "Accentuate the Positive," and "Blues in the Night"—that were all by Harold Arlen. After the concert Breen asked the conductor if he knew who wrote the songs. "But sir, nobody wrote them—they are just old American ballads that were made into a folk medley," the conductor said. He thought they dated from Stephen Foster's day. Breen looked at the printed music and saw a tiny penciled scrawl that said H. ARLENE. "When I told the conductor that 'H. Arlene' was still alive," Breen said, "he couldn't believe it."

With one famous exception, that blue Arlen sound turned up in a long line of Hollywood movies and Broadway musicals in the 1930s and 1940s, often introduced by black singers—typically, "Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe" in the movie *Cabin in the Sky*, "The Eagle and Me" in *Bloomer Girl*, "Come Rain or Come Shine" in *St. Louis Woman*, and "Sleepin' Bee" in *House of Flowers*. The exception was *The Wizard of Oz*, for which Arlen and his lyricist, E. Y. Harburg, wrote a singularly sunny score, including the classic "Over the Rainbow." Although it's one of Arlen's purest melodies, straying from the major scale only briefly in the release, it has a wistful quality because of Harburg's yearning imagery and because it launched a young and wistful Judy Garland. Thus inoculated, Judy sang a high proportion of Arlen ballads for the rest of her life, including his last great torch song, "The Man That Got Away," in *A Star is Born*.

In Johnny Mercer, Arlen got a lyricist whose colloquial ear and infectious rhythm were tuned to who he was. "Harold's melodies are way out because Jewish melodies are way out—they take unexpected twists and turns," Mercer told me, and in their collaboration on a series of memorable songs for forgettable movies in the early 1940s he found the perfect answer for whatever Arlen threw at him: the poignant "This Time the Dream's On Me," the stately "My Shining Hour," the meandering "That Old Black Magic," the relaxed "Let's Take the Long Way Home," the august "Out of This World," the bluesy "One for My Baby," the spiritual-like "Accentuate the Positive," the hip "Hit the Road to Dreamland."

It was no coincidence that Mercer and Arlen achieved together the two high points of their individual careers: one of the best American songs, "Blues in the Night," and one of the best Broadway scores, *St. Louis Woman*. That 1946 musical about a black jockey is recalled mainly for its hit ballad, "Come Rain or Come Shine," and for two Pearl Bailey numbers, "A Woman's Prerogative" and "Legalize My Name," that percolated with the humor of both Mercer and Arlen. But for me—the show closed after 131 performances despite my repeated patronage in the second balcony—those were just treats on the top of the jewel box. The real gems were songs that approached the level of Negro folk opera: a cakewalk, a lullaby, a chorale, a superb lament ("I Had Myself a True Love"), and various other ballads and fragments that were organic to the whole. Such was the surfeit of riches that the best song of all, "I Wonder What Became of Me," got dropped from the show, but it survives in the repertory of cabaret singers, a textbook example of Arlen's elegant harmonic structure and Mercer's vivid imagery:

Lights are bright,
Pianos making music all the night,
And they pour champagne
Just like it was rain,
It's a sight to see,
But I wonder what became of me . . .

Equally rich is Mercer's lyric for the brassy "Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home." Sung in the show by a "free and easy" woman, it ends:

Cross the river, round the bend,
Howdy stranger, so long friend,

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There's a voice in the lonesome wind
that keeps whisperin' "Roam!"
I'm goin' where a welcome mat is,
No matter where that is,
'Cause any place I hang my hat is home.

The elements that came to full maturity in *St. Louis Woman* can be traced back to the wail that was "Blues in the Night," in 1941. Arlen and Mercer were hired to write the score for a movie about an American jazz band and to include one hit song of a blues nature. "I went home," Arlen recalled, "and just thought about it for two days. After all, anybody can write a blues song. The hard thing is to write one that doesn't sound like every other blues song. Finally I decided to cast it in the traditional form of the early American blues—three sections of 12 bars each, rather than in the conventional 32-bar Tin Pan Alley shape."

He met his own challenge by writing three of his most haunting melodies, then repeating the first 12 bars and adding a 4-bar coda. Mercer did the rest with night-time rain sounds, train sounds, winds, breezes, crying trees, mockingbird songs, hiding moons, Southern place names, and mournful whistles, hums, and "whoo-ees." Is there a more evocative American song?

[A]
My mama done tol' me,
When I was in knee pants,
My mama done tol' me, son,
A woman'll sweet talk,
And give ya the big eye,
But when the sweet talkin's done
A woman's a two-face,
A worrisome thing
Who'll leave ya t' sing
The blues in the night.

Musically, that main theme is not only supremely catchy. It gets locked into our ear by the blues convention of repetition. First it's repeated twice exactly; later it's repeated twice metrically, but with different notes ("A woman'll sweet talk, And give ya the big eye"), and then the same meter recurs once more, again with different notes ("A woman's a two-face"). Then the section is satisfyingly rounded off by descending to the low tonic note. Lyrically, "sweet talk" and "two-face" are gaudy idioms, and "worrisome" may be the best thing in the whole song.

[B]
Now the rain's a fallin',
Hear the train a-callin',
Whoo-ee,
(My mama done tol' me),
Hear that lonesome whistle
Blowin' 'cross the trestle,
Whoo-ee,
(My mama done tol' me),
A whoo-ee-duh-whooee,
Ol' clickety-clack's
A echoin' back
The blues in the night.

Musically, the song breaks out of the tight blues format and begins to swoop and soar in sorrowful cadences. Lyrically, nobody ever wrote twelve better bars. Listen to all those heartbreaking sounds.

[C]
The evenin' breeze'll start
The trees to cryin',
And the moon'll hide its light
When you get the blues in the night.
Take my word,
The mockingbird'll
Sing the saddest kind of song,
He knows things are wrong,
And he's right. [Whistle]

Musically, that's Arlen at his bluest—all those seventh chords straining and resolving into each other. Lyrically, I especially enjoy the mockingbird who's right for knowing that things are wrong. Unlike all those dumb birds in Hoagy Carmichael songs, this one is advancing the plot.

[A]
From Natchez to Mobile,
From Memphis to St. Joe,
Wherever the four winds blow;
I been in some big towns
An' heard me some big talk,
But there is one thing I know,
A woman's a two-face,
A worrisome thing
Who'll leave ya t' sing
The blues in the night. [Hum]

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Musically, that's a classic blues recapitulation. Lyrically, the first three lines are pure American poetry. They're so representative of all the pleasure Mercer has given me with his use of the American language that I'll leave the final words to him:

[Coda]
My mama was right,
There's blues in the night.

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Frank Lloyd Wright, The Many Lives Of

DAN PINCK

My mind is a jumble shop following a crash course in Frank Lloyd Wright. My course centered on Meryle Secrest's biography *Frank Lloyd Wright* (Knopf, $30), a sturdy windlass of a book, with a collateral reading list that included scriptures by Wright himself, varied memoirs by his friends and disciples, a visit to Taliesin West, his wife Olgivanna's ornate recollection, Brendan Gill's graceful biography, numerous picture books of Wright's work, and an archival mass of articles in architecture magazines beginning in year one. The course reinforced my conviction that Wright's architecture is unsurpassed—to call him a genius is inadequate in framing his vision and his accomplishment. There are so many discontinuous entry points into his life and career that I cannot decide where to begin my account. Properly, I contemplated a site plan, an elevation, and an internal plan—to no avail. A conjurer or a genius is needed to translate seamlessly the gallimaufry of my course. And so my account is constructed of beginnings. "History is bound to be misleading," sayeth Wright. If this is correct, then differing compass settings and perspectives are warranted.

What do we know about Frank Lloyd Wright? We know that he is the last architect to bat over .400; that he is copied but rarely emulated; that he was a difficult person; that he had three wives and one emasculating mother; that he is still the most honored architect in the United States, with at least twenty of his houses and buildings open for public tours; that he designed houses and buildings in thirty-six states and overseas, most notably the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo; that books about him and his work are a cottage industry; that he had students and disciples at Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin, and Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona; that he designed Fallingwater in Mill Run, Pennsylvania, and the S. C. Johnson and Son Administration Building in Racine, Wisconsin, the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, and the Avery Coonley Playhouse in Riverside, Illinois; that he was politically incorrect most of his life, with his views further to the right than those of Charles Lindbergh and Burton K. Wheeler; that he derided well-known architects in the United States and Europe; that he was born, as George S. Kaufman was, owing twelve dollars, with bill collectors chasing him throughout his seventy-three-year professional career; that he had a talent for making enemies as well as friends; and that he remains as modern as MTV and will never go out of style.

Much of what we know about Wright comes from our own good sense and taste, unfiltered by the architectural jargon that infects most of the books about him and his work. The jargon of architecture is only slightly less painful than that of art criticism. Even Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens said that too much talk and writing about architecture gave him a headache. The uniqueness and value of Meryle Secrest's biography is that she writes within an unadorned post-and-beam structure, with few flourishes, no humbug, and no shoddy use of architectural jargon. She places facts in their proper places, and the bare bones of Wright's existence in her book are a good introduction, or antidote, to the flowery books about Wright by architects and architectural historians. Secrest is a journalist and biographer. Credit her with not becoming a critic of architecture.

Nevertheless, it's rather strange to read a 634-page book about Frank Lloyd Wright and

✪ DAN PINCK has written for, among other magazines, *Encounter*, the *New Republic*, and *Foreign Intelligence Literary Scene*.

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not to be immersed in architecture. The blandness of the biography, its stolid accumulation of data—almost eerily separated from design itself—does maintain our interest and invite our respect and goodwill. We shall never need to know more about Frank Lloyd Wright's life than we learn from her biography.

For the reader who is unfamiliar with the cornmeal mush of architectural writing, I cite a few bites of such writing that I take out of context but which reveal what the context is: a critic in a major national newspaper claims that the design of a proposed new police academy in the South Bronx, in New York, "offers an opportunity of overpowering importance: a chance to rethink the critical place of law enforcement in American cities today." What is there about the design that helps in the rethinking? Among other reasons: "At its western edge, the facade rises to a sharp glittering peak and pulls partly away from the building envelope, as if it were doing stretching exercises before a morning run." If this is your cup of tea, be forewarned: don't read Secrest's book. On the other hand, more or less (note I did not say less *is* more), some architectural writing is great fun: a noted West Coast architect, who recently designed a restaurant in Japan, using a large fish in his design, said that the image of a fish had been with him since his childhood, "when his grandmother would bring home carp with which to make gefilte fish." That's a two-bagger in any league.

An impossible man. A deplorable person. Many distinguished persons have been marked by an inability to relate decently to those closest to them. And, in a final assessment, the attributes of a great achievement override the liabilities of odious personal relationships. In matters of design, Wright had perfect pitch; in other sectors of his life, he was out in left field, a mean-spirited, world-class fruitcake, an egomaniac of immense proportion. Some of the most prominent architects today partly achieve their notoriety by outlandish behavior and pronouncements about their own worth. You can see photographs of them, looking owlishly bemused beside their mercantile patrons, with their *ism*-style buildings in the background. But you rather feel that their push to fame—and commissions—is mostly an act. They have changed their colors to achieve success; but they are slightly dubious about the enterprise. With Wright, the act was his life, a glandular reaction to his environment. And, lastly, the act does not explain his genius nor does it diminish his accomplishments. Because of or in spite of—it doesn't make any difference. We judge his attainments in design—his legacy to us; we do not judge his character, which mattered to those closest to him.

No matter that, in his relationships to his wives and other women, he makes a Cub Scout of Woody Allen and his contretemps; no matter that, in his dealings with his clients, potential clients, and bill collectors, he outshines W. C. Fields as a con man and trickster; no matter that some of his vitriolic pronouncements are centimeters away from those of Ezra Pound. Wright ate clients for breakfast, other architects for lunch, and anyone who doubted that he was the world's greatest architect for dinner. He paddled upstream in a coracle of prejudice and suspicion; but he never sank. He never changed, and he never gave up. The more he was honored, the sharper he honed his knives. He was probably unaware of how he acted; he didn't care.

Question: How does Frank Lloyd Wright resemble Woody Allen? You're making a severe charge, a defamation of character. What's your evidence?

Answer: Well, let's say that you are a successful businessman, an architect with a thriving practice, the husband of an attractive wife, and the father of six young children. You have been married twenty years. One day you decide to decamp for Europe with the wife of an Oak Park client and neighbor. She, Mamah Borthwick Cheney, decamped first for Boulder, Colorado, with her three children to visit a friend, she told her husband. In Boulder, she wrote to her husband to come pick up the children; she went to New York and sailed for Europe with Wright. Together, they abandoned nine children. Wright, always in hock, left his family with an unpaid grocery bill of nine hundred dollars, in 1909.

Question: That's interesting, even shocking, but don't comparisons to Woody Allen seem far-fetched?

Answer: Maybe. Let's add that Wright was investigated by the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation under the White Slave Traffic Act, the Mann Act, and by J. Edgar Hoover for seditious activities during the Second World War. And let's add that the sheriff's

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department was after him in Spring Green, Wisconsin, for cruelty to animals: Wright was reported driving sixty miles an hour in his convertible, with a police dog on his running board. If you'd like some picturesque minutiae, try this: the mother of Olgivanna, his third wife, was a general in the Montenegrin army; Olgivanna herself had been a disciple of Georgei Ivanovich Gurdjieff and the leading dancer in his dance troop; her function as Wright's wife was to stoke his ego and command his disciples, and, when Wright died, she wrote one of his sons, "Taliesin is not for the likes of you." She was as off center as a woman in a Woody Allen movie. In her memoir, *Our House*, she drops names and records their famous visitors. She tells us that Carl Sandburg read some of his *Rootabaga Stories*, including "How Bozo the Button Buster Busted All His Buttons When a Mouse Came By." The reading followed, without transition, a communal put-down of Chiang Kai-shek and the "yellow peril." I mean, doesn't this have the makings of a Woody Allen movie? Imagine Frank Lloyd Wright stepping off the screen like Tom Baxter in *The Purple Rose of Cairo*. His life is the same kind of fantasy or fable.

Try this cinematic epiphany. Miss Secrest writes: "One of Wright's many apprentices to study in that studio recalled that one day when he was buried underneath the Steinway making another of the innumerable attempts to restore its legs, he saw the master saunter into the room. Believing himself alone, Wright arranged three or four objects on the window ledge, then stood back admiringly. He walked over to the piano, still oblivious of the hidden observer, struck a few chords and pirouetted out of the room, singing to himself, 'I am the greatest.' "

Wright's uniform reminded one of his clients of the man "on a Quaker Oats package: knee trousers, long stockings and broad-brimmed hat, worn with panache." Wright's middle wife designed an all-velvet suit for him, complete with lace collar and cuffs, with trousers that buttoned at the ankle. Wright liked shirts; he often wore two shirts, one outside the other. He also favored high-heeled shoes.

The recombinant fictions and episodic hilarities of his life remind me of Woody Allen, on the screen and off. In his later years, Wright looked like Edith Sitwell.

Question: All right. But how does he remind you of W. C. Fields?

Answer: The short answer is that Arthur Miller, who asked Wright to design a house for him and his wife, Marilyn Monroe, said that Wright reminded him of W. C. Fields. The longer answer is that to many persons, employees, employers, clients, contractors, relatives, disciples, bill collectors, Wright was an exquisite and mean confidence man and trickster. Financial arrangements were distended by his own selfishness and arrogance; sooner or later, almost everyone who did business with him concluded that he was a rogue—but often a charming one. Like son, like father: Miss Secrest portrays Wright's father, whose behavior, innate or learned, was inherited by his son, Frank. One of Miss Secrest's accomplishments is her meticulous portrait of Wright's progenitors going back a hundred years or so. You feel as though you know where Frank Lloyd Wright (born Frank Lincoln Wright) comes from; his antecedents, you might say, molded his character. Wright's father, William, an itinerant Baptist preacher, musician, and lawyer (he opened a law office, despite having no background in law), was "wildly impractical about money," and, Miss Secrest notes, "Wherever he went, Wright demonstrated his dazzling gift for attracting the friendship of prominent local men and women, not to mention the town's newspaper editors." William Carey Wright, a graduate of Harvard, had style. Miss Secrest says that the men on the mother's side were "feckless when it came to money." They, or many of them going back to Wales, were Dissenters and Nonconformists, challenging all authority. Intractability was carried in the genes.

In his middle years, short of money, Wright incorporated himself, Frank Lloyd Wright, Inc., asking his acquaintances, friends, and clients to give the new corporation $7,500 each; many of them did, some of them knowing they were being conned.

Fields was a genial trickster. Wright was mean. He took credit for renderings done by staff members; he lambasted former employees who set up practices on their own. He underpaid, as belatedly as possible, his employees and disciples.

Question: How do you justify your comparison to Ezra Pound?

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Answer: If you were willing to listen to Pound long enough, you would uncover some remarkable insights about literature—and nothing else. My guess is that Wright offered some startling perceptions mixed up in his malarkey. He seems to have had a severe intelligence and imagination about architecture—and little sense about any other topic or issue. Although Wright's disciples were less wacko than those of Pound (Pound's civil service aesthetes attempted to run Pound for president, with the slogan of "Ez for Pres"), some of them approached Wright's words and pronouncements as Holy Writ. Wright used several aliases, Pound used many, including Sally Biggs, Baptiste Von Helmholtz, Alfie Venison, Ben Tor, B. H. Dias, Alfred Venison, and Caid Ali. Safe to say, as Brendan Gill said in his biography of Wright, "eccentrics attract eccentrics." Money, which Wright spent a lifetime trying to get and which Pound spent a lifetime inveigling against, eluded them both. Their antagonism to our participation in the Second World War is, on some tacks, remarkably similar.

Gill states that "Wright had always been pro-German." He recalls Wright's speech to Rotarians, in Tampa, in 1938, urging the Rotarians not to assume the right to criticize Fascism and Communism abroad when we had so many political evils at home that we were failing to deal with." Ezra Pound said in a radio broadcast from Italy (April 27, 1943): I think quitè deeply and definitely that the American troops in North Africa, all of them, ought to go back to America, if they can." During the war, Wright attempted to gain draft deferments for many of his student-disciples; a few went to prison for avoiding the draft and a few served as conscientious objectors—and some went to war. The Justice Department considered his behavior seditious and began an investigation; after a review, the Department decided not to pursue the case, considering that he was motivated more by anti-British feelings than by pro-German sympathies. Pound put it bluntly in another radio broadcast from Italy (May 4, 1942): "Now that John Bull is dead and Moses Bullstein has taken over the business. . . ." Wright's anti-Semitism was noticed years before, when, in a letter to the press, he blamed his mounting debts and Mann Act charges on a posse of professions and you-know-whom: "And tapped wires, intercepted telegrams, detectives, reporters everywhere. Photographers, lawyers, Kikes (*sic*) and shysters. . . ." So it goes. (On another occasion, an essay might address the curious fact that several noted American architects were—is this the right word?—enthralled by Nazi Germany. The puzzle of Werner Heisenberg is no less complex.)

One dissimilarity is that Pound throughout his career raised money for others; Wright raised it solely for himself. Their legacy is in their works: Pound's early poetry and Wright's houses and buildings. Pound helped to build reputations for others, including Joyce and Eliot; Wright rarely had a good word to say about any other living architect and heaped contumely on dead ones. Wright was attuned to meanness; Pound was not.

So, my margin of error is 5 to 8 percent. Wright's phenomenal batting average in architecture overrides his personal debilities. It is our curiosity that compels us to be interested in the personal minutiae; that there seems to be little connection between the man's life and his work is not the fault of the biographer. Secrest's biography serves as a sturdy fulcrum to the outlandish, beatific memoirs written by so many critics and disciples. Her research is impressive and the even presentation of her data makes his life coherent. But it does not explain his genius. Brendan Gill's biography, *Many Masks*, illuminates many connections and discontinuities between Wright's design achievements and his professional career; but the mystery remains. In a conversation with Wright, Gill advanced a theory that all of the great men of the period during and after the Second World War, Churchill and Roosevelt among them, "had some taint of the charlatan in their makeup." Wright asked Gill if that word characterized himself. Gill changed the word to *mountebank*. Wright said, "I had to make a noise in the world, in order to gain as much of the world's attention as I could. Otherwise, I would have had a lot of work on paper and only a little of it coming up out of the ground in bricks and mortar."

Bruno Zevi, a critic of architecture, said of Wright, whom he admired greatly: "You cannot be a great architect without first being a great man." Nonsense. R. I. P., Frank.

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II

A critical, architectural frame of reference is not what Miss Secrest brings to her biography of Frank Lloyd Wright. At first, this is disconcerting: you feel as though you're reading privileged information in a dossier or in an intelligence file. She concentrates on the facts and events and intersections in Wright's life. There's enough data surrounding small and large events to convict Wright of greatness, even though his architectural accomplishments are largely unfiltered. In an odd way, it's like an examination of the hole but not the doughnut surrounding the hole. However, on reflection, you realize that her approach is exactly what's needed as an antidote to the idolatrous, jargon-strewn mass of fictive worship of Wright. Miss Secrest's style is that of a good business-school case writer—an art in itself—in which the pertinent data are presented in an appropriately dry manner—no flair, no bombast, no judgmental asides. Just the facts. Good cases can produce good discussions; they force you to examine the evidence for your beliefs: How do you know you know? No wrong answers, no right answers; it is a matter of basing your opinions on the evidence. And if a fact-laden biography compels you to assess the facts, that's not a bad result. Miss Secrest's biography, as I read it, is an excellent case; its strength comes from what is not said, from its omissions. Her life of Frank Lloyd Wright is neither intimate nor sympathetic; it is a record, and a completely full one, of his life and career.

Meryle Secrest is a journalist and biographer. She has been criticized by reviewers of her biographies of Bernard Berenson and Salvador Dalí because she is not a professional artist or art critic. She is criticized now because she is neither an architect nor an architectural historian. This misses the point of her own accomplishments. If a biographer has to have the same vocation as his subject, then every biographer from Plutarch to Lytton Strachey to Richard Ellmann should have pursued a career as a chicken farmer.

Wright invented his life as he went along, revising his history when it pleased him; he even rewrote his autobiography. He's a hard man to pin down on anything. Secrest is less interested in reading his character than in portraying his singularities; she gives us a portrait of his life, based on the facts surrounding major and minor points of departure. Her biography gives a sense of completeness, engendered in part by her journalistic detachment. I praise her for what she's done; I do not criticize her for what she hasn't done.

In following the course of Wright's life, we gain contemporaneous explorations of his growth as an architect. Most of his major architectural commissions are delineated in details; the who, what, why, and where are answered with equanimity, no design flourishes. Miss Secrest separates the evidence (gained in her research from primary sources) from the apocryphal sources. From Unity Temple in Spring Green, Wisconsin, to the Masieri Memorial in Venice, Italy; from the Guggenheim Museum in New York to the Price Tower in Bartlesville, Oklahoma; from Fallingwater to Taliesin East and West; from the Coonley Playhouse in Riverside, Illinois, to the Zimmerman house in Manchester, New Hampshire—Miss Secrest presents the design issues, the people involved in the project, and Wright's response to his clients and to the management of the work. If her attention is weighted to the history of the event rather than solely to its architectural significance, then that's her call. No small achievement.

III

Abraham Flexner said that education is like the measles: you can never tell where you'll catch it. Education is an experiment and by its nature an incomplete one. Miss Secrest stretches Wright's achievements on the frame of his education, which was as unique as it was strenuous and thorough. Despite the overlay of his peculiarities that caused some critics to label him preposterous, Wright was an educated person. That he was an autodidact of the front rank is beside the point. He served a lifelong apprenticeship in his profession, an apprenticeship that taught him what he needed to know about architecture and the practice of architecture. As an old man, he claimed that he was still an apprentice and that he was unwilling to give up his amateur status. Of course, he was anything but an amateur; but his devotion to asking questions about design sustained his growth as an architect. And if ever a profession demands a continuing apprenticeship, it is architecture. Never mind that

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Wright did not graduate from high school and that he left college after two semesters. He was educated in a way that few architects, then and now, are educated.

A professor of astronomy and a mathematician who studied anatomy, physiology, structures, engineering, mathematics, with scant instruction in design, at Wadham College, was one of the world's great architects: Christopher Wren. One of his principal assistants, Nicholas Hawksmoor, whose formal education ceased after grammar school, began his architectural apprenticeship as Wren's clerk. (I don't suggest that a pre-med program is the right course of study for a prospective architect; rather that the absence of formal education in design need not be an overriding impediment, any more than Abraham Lincoln's failure to attend Harvard Law School diminished his understanding and practice of law.)

A master's thesis at the Yale School of Architecture (which has an enviable reputation and which has a number of world-recognized teachers) was titled "Materiality and Architectural Criticism." The thesis's description is:

An exploration into the material nature of architecture and its role in architectural meaning suggests the following ideas: that culturally-assigned meaning is construed out of and upon a substratum of determinate meaning given immediately in perception; that the former is related to the latter as figure to ground; that decisions on the degree of discontinuity of the figure are crucial architectural decisions, determined not by rule but by judgment; and that criticism of architecture as a material enterprise must attend to such decisions made at the threshold of figuration.

I. A. Richards said that any idea could be conveyed in his eight-hundred-word program of Basic English. But he didn't account for architecture.

"I chose my ancestors with the greatest of care," Wright said. He was the son of a preacher (father) and a teacher (mother) and the descendant of a band of eccentric Nonconformists. Miss Secrest admirably examines Wright's progenitors, stretching from Wales to his lineage in the United States. The Unitarian background of his clan, the education of his parents, the struggle to survive economically in complex environments, and the influence of farming and village communities all serve in her biography to give us splendid illuminations about Wright's history. Immersed in the facts of his personal history, the reader gains a profound insight into Wright's personality and his accomplishments. It is, therefore, as a historian that Miss Secrest makes her own contribution to Wrightian studies.

Wright's mother, so we are told by Wright, was determined that her only son become an architect, and she had a plan to make him one. First, she hung drawings of English cathedrals in his nursery; second, she exposed (I suppose this is the right word) him to the proscriptions of Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, and other such cats. Froebel was the founder of the first kindergarten; it was based on his belief in the divine unity of nature, spiritual training, amenable physical surroundings, and the notion that very young children were educable. Loosely, his theory was that creative individuals could be produced by a natural order of individual development compacted by concrete experiences. This was not so much learning by doing or by doing your own thing as it was learning by submitting children to a fenced-in set of—well, let's call them learning aids, such as Froebel blocks. At age nine, Wright was given a set of Froebel blocks, which he used at home. Wright said that he was influenced by this primordial brand of open education. (Who are we to disbelieve him?) Wright held to Froebel's beliefs throughout his career. The Unitarian doctrine or dogma complemented Froebel's precepts.

At age nineteen, Wright left the University of Wisconsin, where he studied mathematics, French, engineering, and English, to become an architect in Chicago. Through the intervention of his uncle, Wright was hired by a prominent architect, J. Lyman Silsbee, who had been commissioned by Wright's uncle, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, to design the family chapel. Inevitably, Wright later denied that connections, family or otherwise, had ever helped him get a job, first in Silsbee's office, and a year later, with the Chicago firm of Adler and Sullivan.

A hundred years or so ago, Boston was stolid respectability in architecture; prominent stuffed shirts designed classical-revival buildings and somber, overweight, made-to-order houses. Their buildings still command respect if not affection. All the foreign styles found a

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home in Boston. Chicago was the center of experimentation and innovation. Some of the prominent Chicago architects had escaped from stuffy Boston and sharpened their creative wits in the development of designs that read "Made in America." Perhaps chief among them was Louis Sullivan, who grew up in Boston and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's School of Architecture, stocked with foreign architects. Sullivan was both a theoretician ("form follows function" is his coinage) and a pioneer in the design of skyscrapers. His firm, one of Chicago's largest, gained a number of commissions. Wright became Sullivan's favorite employee; and Wright adopted many of Sullivan's precepts, later expropriating some of them as his own. But no matter: Sullivan was the teacher and Wright the student.

Who said that, instead of imitating past architectural styles, one should study for an "understanding [of] the organic and natural laws that created them"? Not Frank Lloyd Wright. It was Owen Jones, the British writer, in his *Grammar of Ornament.* Miss Secrest says that "Jones provided the theoretical framework that Wright would put to such good use as he mastered the task of transforming the structural forms found in nature into the alchemy of his art." Wright read widely, and Miss Secrest has read some of the books that influenced him. To her great credit, her portrait of Wright's education has a deep background; his progress in his work-study program is smartly correlated with his development as an architect.

Sullivan must have been a superb teacher and boss. H. Allen Brooks, in his book *The Prairie School,* quotes Hugh S. Morrison in *his* book, *Louis Sullivan: Prophet of Modern Architecture.* "Sullivan wanted no one to be an imitator, not even of himself, and his success as a teacher may be indicated by the way in which his followers for the most part acquired his manner of thinking rather than his specific stylisms. Some of them, armed with this start, progressed into individual styles only remotely resembling Sullivan's." His office was a school, and he contributed to seminars for young Chicago architects at the Chicago Architectural Club. Sullivan's office and the Club were Wright's college.

It was inevitable that Wright would one day start his own school. Although it was begun for a novel reason—to gain the tuition income to support Taliesin, in Spring Green, Wisconsin—it has served, since 1931, to educate a number of good architects who needed an alternative to a formal program, in an accredited school of architecture. The school—then called the Taliesin Fellowship—was a kind of floating seminar on anything that struck Wright's fancy. Arts and crafts, learning by doing, and working on Wright's commissions—Wright's school educated students and the students educated Wright. He was the master, and students did things his way or they left. Despite its Deweyism, Parkerism, with an adult-size dose of Froebel, his atelier was not undirected. At its apex, the school had sixty-five students, a few of whom, including E. Fay Jones, achieved distinction.

What, really, was the school about? In a letter of 1936 to a prospective candidate for admission, Kevin Lynch, who later became a renowned teacher and planner, Wright said:

Answering your questions about Fellowships at Taliesin—

1. Your stay at Yale could be no possible help to your work at Taliesin.

2. Your lack of ability to draw is soon rectified.

3. We have no courses nor any curriculum at Taliesin. Only performance under my direction and alongside other apprentices.

4. No engineering courses will help you here except as they are not anterior but posterior to experience in learning the nature of the thing to which they apply. The sense of the whole and its philosophy first. Technique first and the cart before the horse.

5. Theory and practice are one at Taliesin.

6. City planning is [a] natural feature of our work at Taliesin (Broadacre City).

7. The best time for an architect in embryo to join the Fellowship is before any time is wasted along conventional educational lines in architecture and engineering.

Taliesin East and West were not places for happy campers. I suspect that a neurotic reverence for Wright was a prerequisite for admission; but I may be wrong. An alumnus of the Fellowship said, "I knew what Olgivanna was capable of. We'd get someone new, a boy called Michael, and a couple of months later she would interview him and say, 'Oh, you are doing a wonderful job. Joe and Ken keep telling me how well you do. Now, why is it that all

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the boys like you? What is the matter with you? Are you a homosexual?' " Taliesin was not to everyone's taste; but for those who survived the neurotic atmosphere, it was a place of vibrant improvisation—all according to Wright.

To visit Taliesin West now is like visiting a memory frozen in space. The beauty of the place is impressive, even though it badly needs stitching and repairing. Tacky, expensive developments are sited below the school. Voices of the Taliesin guides are funereal, and as you are taken around the place you expect Wright himself to turn a corner or to rise from an uncomfortable chair of his design and greet you. The ambience is rather spooky. His followers seem to pursue a rigid adventure.

Institutions evolve. The Taliesin Fellowship is now a degree-granting institution, offering bachelor's and master's degrees. It is now called the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, accredited by the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges. Visionaries who start schools usually outlive their usefulness. Wright never outlived his usefulness. But would he say today what he said years ago? "Were I a Rockefeller—Ford—or Du Pont, I mean as rich, I would buy up our leading universities—close them and hang out the sign—closed by the beneficence of one, Frank Lloyd Wright."

IV

The world was Wright's classroom and, like any good architect, he was influenced by what he saw. Some critics accused him of copying; others, including Vincent Scully, raised the level of the debate by saying that Wright engaged in a "continual condensation" of many sources. From his earliest commissions to his last, striking similarities were noted between Wright's houses and buildings and those built before his, in Germany, Japan, Italy, and the United States. If you accept the opinions of some critics, Wright was a world-class plagiarist. Miss Secrest discusses these charges, simply noting them; she makes no pejorative inferences. The accusations are interesting and that is all they are. Wright traveled in Europe and in Japan and all over the United States. Why wouldn't he be influenced by what he saw?

Many cultures in many different nations contributed to his visions. Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Mexican, British, and American Indian vernaculars are discerned in some of his work. He was introduced to the arts-and-crafts movements and learned from them, too. He also learned what not to do.

Robert Campbell, an architectural critic, in a recent article on Wright, quoted Sir Hugh Casson: "Architects are cannibals if they are not parrots." Campbell adds: "Wright was no parrot." Campbell said that Wright was "the first and foremost figure in the American Arts and Crafts Movement. Given that this movement included the likes of the Greene brothers in Pasadena and Bernard Maybeck in Berkeley, no higher praise is necessary or possible."

Wright was the Count Rumford of innovations in design and in architectural engineering. His contributions in these fields include the use of radiant floor heating, recessed lighting, reinforced concrete, electricity for heating and cooking, air conditioning, ranch houses (they can be well designed), double-glazed windows, atriums in taller buildings, subfloor telephone and electric light connections, low-cost housing communities, prefabricated housing, synthetic fire-resistant material, earthquake-resistant structures, wall-hung toilets, carports, and planned, regional cities in the manner espoused by his friend Lewis Mumford.

In our leading monthly architecture magazines, hardly an issue is published without a number of projects that distinctly reveal Wright's influence. Although his career took several dips in the United States during his lifetime, his prominence is now assured, here and in a few other countries, including especially Australia. Arthur Erickson, Canada's leading architect, bears a remarkable affinity to Wright. No wonder: as a young man, Erickson visited Wright and has since acknowledged his indebtedness to him.

V

Without encomiastic chords, Meryle Secrest gives us an exegesis of the evolution of some of Frank Lloyd Wright's important commissions and a wide window into his relationships with his clients; his cost overruns and design changes; the design problems and design solutions; and his contrariness about everyone and everything that displeased him. I don't mean to imply that her biography is a kind of John Gunther *Inside* approach, marking dates and

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places and names as a means of carrying a story. Not that at all. Miss Secrest's strength is that she adds sensibly to our presumed knowledge of Wright. We find that a lot of our assumptions are wrong. There's no flab or artifice in her biography; she's interested neither in building him up nor in diminishing him. Other books may be more comprehensive in their consideration of his life and his architecture (Robert Twombly's and Brendan Gill's are two good examples); but none, as far as I know, is so inclusive, fair-minded, and free from harsh judgments.

Miss Secrest makes few approximations about Wright's genius; that's to our advantage. Since no one else defines the secret of his magic, there's no reason why she should be expected to and many good reasons why she shouldn't try.

Brief histories of important commissions relate Wright to us as no amount of discursive, unfiltered praise can. The Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, one of Wright's major commissions, is portrayed in twenty-two pages; his last project, the Guggenheim Museum, in ten pages; the Larkin Building in ten pages. Each project is a succinct portrait.

As you come to know Wright better, you realize that a large portion of his eccentricity was a mask that helped him gain notoriety and commissions. His arrogance was a selling point; or it may have been. Architects abhor public criticism; but they seem to enjoy being broadsided by other architects who have achieved fame. I've attended several meetings at which world-famous architects lambasted the audience of architects. Some of the comments of the speakers were notorious, some in the worst taste; but the audiences clapped at the most outlandish statements. It seems to be part of the persona of wide recognition. And Wright was a preeminent master of the put-down. Most architects, to him, were incompetent; large firms were factories; and individual architects of renown were leveled. Antoni Gaudi's work, for instance, was a "laxative." Wright took no prisoners.

"Well, you see, I'm supposed to be very arrogant," said Wright. "But I, at least, would not be able to verify that statement myself. Very early in life, of course, being very sure of my ground and very sure of my star too, I had to choose between honest arrogance and hypocritical humility. Well, I chose honest arrogance, and I'm still at it."

In 1991, *Architectural Record*, celebrating its centenary, surveyed its architectural readership to determine the ranking of the world's most important buildings, from 1891 to 1991. Twelve of Wright's buildings were on the list. Fallingwater ranked first; his other buildings on the list are the Robie House (6); S. C. Johnson and Son Administration Building (13); Unity Temple (14); Guggenheim Museum (21); Taliesin West (25); Larkin Building (also 25); Imperial Hotel (47); Jacobs House (49); W. H. Winslow House (76); Taliesin East (also 76); and Price Tower (100).

Wright had blasted the work of at least forty architects whose buildings are listed. Reading the list carefully, we ought to praise Wright. A good number of the buildings had not been constructed during Wright's lifetime; but who would praise the World Financial Center, the Portland Public Service Building, Arcosanti, or Disneyland? Disneyland, indeed.

Who are the tastemakers in architecture? Generally, they are architects themselves. Wright was a master critic of architecture, and he knew how to play the game for all it is worth. His honest arrogance was a template over all of his considerations of the work of architects, his own and that of others.

So it's a relief to have Miss Secrest's accounting of Wright's life, with her emphasis on his work divorced from the scheming eccentricities of his personality. It is shocking at first to read Wright as unadorned history. But later, you appreciate the soundness—call it even-handedness—of her approach.

VI

Wright wrote lists of things to avoid in designing houses; he said that visible roofs are expensive and unnecessary; old-fashioned basements, except for fuel and heater space are plague spots; furniture, pictures, and bric-a-brac are unnecessary because the walls can be made to include or *be* them; no gutters, no downspouts; no plastering in the building; no painting at all—wood best preserves itself. These excisions alone do not a good architect make. A critic of Wright said that his legacy is this: "If you think about every issue in architecture from the vase on the shelf to the mountain on the horizon, and address them all with zest and sense, you can do some pretty amazing buildings."

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What is Wright's secret? I believe that it lies in the Far East, in the Chinese practice of *feng shui.* In Hong Kong now, if you're wise, you don't make a move in constructing a building without first having a *feng shui* (meaning, wind and water) consultant or master who, from the plans, measures a building's capacity to deflect malevolent dragons who happen to exist in the area. He judges the shape and directions of the room in a building, its site and its overall scheme and proposes adjustments essential to insure harmony and prosperity for its residents and owners. Wright had a built-in divining rod of *feng shui.* Leave his genius at that. Benevolent dragons watch over his houses and buildings.

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Murder as One of the Liberal Arts

JAMES HITCHCOCK

When, more than 150 years ago, Thomas De Quincey enthroned murder as one of the fine arts, he did not mean the detective stories that would soon become an established genre of popular fiction, but actual crimes of the kind that dominate the popular press for a brief period, then are replaced by new atrocities.

Because they are "news," crime stories (used here to mean accounts of historical events) tend to be ephemeral and seldom attain the status of classics in the way that detective stories (here meaning fiction) sometimes do. Arthur Conan Doyle has a permanent place in the pantheon of famous writers, and Agatha Christie, Ellery Queen, Rex Stout, and a few others have realistic possibilities for minor immortality. But the names of Edmund Pearson, William Roughead, or Jonathan Goodman are totally unknown, except to the small coterie of those devoted to De Quincey's art.

Even the best crime stories are difficult to find, even in libraries or in bookstores that stock hundreds of detective stories. Only within the past few years have larger stores installed "true crime" sections, where, if one is lucky, the browser might find three or four classics amid dozens of sensationalistic accounts of the horrors of the past two decades. "True crime" apparently has become a more popular genre in recent years, but in the exact sense of "news"—publishers exploiting cases prominent in recent headlines or television clips, and featuring gore and sex.

The genuine crime story is simply a branch of history and should be treated as such. While literary merit is highly desirable, and drama welcome if it does not distract from the narrative, the true afficionado's desire is simply to know, and this requires careful, scrupulous, systematic narrative and analysis. While there can be responsible accounts of contemporary crimes in the same way that there can be responsible journalism on any subject, most true-crime reports are the equivalent of tabloid news.

Hence the afficionado somewhere draws a line marking a chronological boundary: the cases before a certain date merit serious attention, while later ones are required to undergo the usual fermentation and the test of changing tastes. That line is now best drawn at roughly the time of World War II. The connoisseur realizes that sensational cases have been coming much thicker and faster in recent decades, which is a major reason for reserving judgment on which should be taken as classics.

"Serial killers" have perhaps always done their work. But the explosion of recent ones—John Wayne Gacy, Theodore Bundy, Dean Coryll, Son of Sam, the Zodiac Killer, Jeffrey Dahmer, and a dozen more—far exceed the number that can be dredged up through even the most diligent historical research. Something, whatever it may be, has obviously happened to make this possible.

In many ways Victorian crimes continue to be the most fascinating, precisely because of the contrast between the stark evil of murder and the stiff respectability of the larger society. The Jack the Ripper murders still fascinate, as they did in 1888, partly because of the contrast between snug rooms with blazing fires, curtains drawn against the fog, and menacing horrors perpetrated amidst flickering gaslights in hidden nooks of the city. If the Victo-

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rians had not been so apparently upright, their misdeeds would be far less interesting. (The peculiar fascination of Victorian crimes, as distinct from those that came before and after, may also have something to do with the young science of photography, which rendered murderers and victims alike in blurry black and white, often with unnatural stares on their faces, in contrast to the graceful drawings of an earlier period and better photographs since.)

Great crimes have of course been perpetrated since the beginning of history, but until the nineteenth century it is rare to find information sufficient to generate real interest. The case of Arden of Faversham, which inspired an anonymous Elizabethan play, contains interesting points of detection, but only the bare outline survives, as is true of the murder of Christopher Marlowe, for example.

Perhaps the first genuine classic is the murder, in 1678, of Edmund Berry Godfrey, a London magistrate, a sensational case at the time and one about which a good deal of information survives. But, if it belongs on the list of classics, it is a forerunner. One or two eighteenth-century cases might be considered, but it was in the nineteenth century that the crime classic came into its own, just as the detective story did.

The *Newgate Calendar* and other such sources provide a great deal of information about eighteenth-century crimes, but the compilers' interests tended to be a combination of sensationalism and moralizing, and the reader is often frustrated and tantalized by the absence of crucial information and a failure to explain enigmas. The same is true of the hardy genres of pamphlets, ballads, and broadsheets, whose factual reliability is furthermore highly suspect.

But if the classic crime itself is largely a nineteenth-century development, there are no classic works of crime writing before World War I, not even De Quincey's superficial early essays. Not only is this genre less commercially successful than its fictional counterpart, it has also been slower in developing.

The Godfrey case is an uncertain entry in the list of classics because it is necessary to draw a line between "mere" crime on the one hand and professional crime and political crime on the other. All three have their fascinations, but the motives in the latter two are much different from those in the first. The actions of professional criminals may hold drama and horror but usually lack mystery and, in any case, lack the ingredient already noticed—fascination with ordinary people doing horrendous things. Political crime—assassinations, terrorism, spying—has endless ramifications (for example, the Sacco-Vanzetti case) that impede an objective solution. Part of the fascination of the Godfrey case is that, while he may well have been murdered as part of the grim political fraud called the Popish Plot, he may also have been killed by a vengeful former defendant in his court, the very uncertainty of motive adding greatly to the fascination of the case. (Interestingly, the case of the only assassinated prime minister in British history—Spencer Percival in 1811—was not a political crime but was motivated by a personal grievance.)

The appeal of crime stories over detective stories is the same as the appeal of historical events over novels—the fact that something actually happened. A fertile imagination can concoct almost anything, to the point where the feat soon loses its dazzle, whereas lasting fascination attaches to events that really did occur.

Devotees of the crime story suffer a major disability beyond the difficulty of finding books—the stock of classics is finite, with only an occasional rediscovery of a lost case or a challenging new interpretation of a familiar one, even as fiction writers churn out an endless series of fresh works for the addicted reader.

Detection is a major part of the crime story's appeal, but the operative principles are quite different from those of the detective story. The detective novelist puts into the story precisely what the reader requires, thus creating a finite and manageable world. The crime writer, on the other hand, often does not know for certain which information is truly relevant, or he has not searched far enough. The actual detectives themselves may have been deficient in the same respect, so that important information is permanently or temporarily lost. Whereas the last page of each detective story marks a definitive solution to the puzzle, each new book about crime tends to prepare the ground for yet further ones, which either produce new facts or reinterpret familiar ones. The author of a crime story is

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only a provisional detective, subject to being overruled by later writers or even by the readers themselves.

In detective stories every piece of information is significant. If a paper clip is found on the floor, it will turn out either to help explain the crime or to be a misleading clue. In life, on the other hand, many facts surrounding an event are irrelevant and even professional detectives err in sifting the important from the misleading. Whereas the world of the detective story is closed, that of the crime story is practically infinite, and serious investigators must cast their nets wider and wider in search of knowledge. (Thus Jonathan Goodman, perhaps the best crime-story writer ever, solves old cases mainly by tracing the characters of the drama in contexts outside the crime itself—their past lives, their social circles, their histories after the crimes were committed.) In principle no case will ever be closed, because there is always the possibility of discovering new information or seeing the old in a new way.

If one uses fifty years as the minimum time a case must retain its interest, the following are the classics of the genre, in order of excellence:

1. The murder of Julia Wallace, Liverpool, 1931. The wife of an insurance agent was battered to death in her parlor. Her husband, Herbert, was convicted, but his conviction was overturned on appeal.

2. The Borden murders, Massachusetts, 1892. The elderly Andrew and Abigail Borden were hacked to death in their home. Lizzie, Andrew's daughter and Abigail's stepdaughter, was tried and acquitted.

3. The Jack the Ripper killings, London, 1888. A series of prostitutes (five, by most reckonings) were strangled and mutilated in the slums of East London. No one was ever charged.

4. The Road Hill House murder, Wiltshire, 1860. An infant, Francis Kent, was found dead with his throat cut in an outhouse. Some years later his half-sister Constance confessed and served a long prison term.

5. The Croydon poisonings, Surrey, 1928. Over a period of several months three members of the same family, in two different households—mother, daughter, and another daughter's husband—died by arsenic poison. No one was ever charged.

6. The Gorse Hall murder, Cheshire, 1909. An intruder burst into the home of the wealthy George Harry Storrs and stabbed him to death after a fierce struggle. Servants and family members at different times identified two different young men as the killer, both of whom were tried and acquitted.

7. The Gatton murders, Queensland, 1898. Three siblings named Murphy, driving home from a village dance, were lured or forced into a field and shot to death, the two women being raped. No one was ever charged.

8. The murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, London, 1678. After hearing evidence related to the alleged Popish Plot, Godfrey disappeared and was found battered and stabbed to death in the country. Several Catholics were executed for alleged complicity, but they were probably scapegoats.

9. The Hall-Mills murders, New Jersey, 1922. An Episcopal minister and a woman of his parish were shot and mutilated in a "lovers' lane," their love letters scattered about the bodies. Edward Hall's wife and two of her relatives were tried and acquitted.

10. The murder of William Desmond Taylor, Hollywood, 1922. A film producer was shot to death in his house, with numerous ancillary mysteries following. No one was ever charged.

11. The Tichbourne claimant, London, 1865. An Australian butcher claimed to be the lost heir to a British title and fortune. After two lengthy trials he was imprisoned for perjury.

12. The Elwell murder, New York, 1920. Joseph Bowne Elwell, man-about-town, was found shot to death in his living room. No one was ever charged.

13. The New Orleans axeman, 1918. During a period of several months, more than a dozen people were killed or menaced by a mysterious figure who broke through doors with an axe and attacked his victims in their beds. No one was ever charged.

14. The abandonment of the *Mary Celeste*, the Atlantic, 1872. An American cargo ship was found under full sail but totally abandoned, with no sign of violence. No official solution was ever offered.

15. The disappearance of Elizabeth Canning, London, 1753. A young woman disappeared from home for a month, then reappeared to say that she had been held prisoner by gypsies. The gypsies were eventually freed, and Canning was convicted of perjury and transported to Connecticut.

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16. The Sandyford murder, Glasgow, 1863. A housemaid, Jessie M'Pherson, was battered to death in a kitchen. A fellow servant, Jessie M'Laghlan, was convicted and served a long prison term.

17. The burning of Evelyn Foster, Northumberland, 1931. A young woman who drove cars for hire was found near death in a field, she and her car severely burned. She claimed to have been raped and set on fire by a male passenger. No one was ever charged.

18. The Lindbergh kidnapping, New Jersey, 1932. The infant son of the great aviator was kidnapped from his nursery and later found murdered in a field. A German immigrant, Bruno Hauptmann, was executed for the crime.

19. The Edalji case, Staffordshire, 1903. George Edalji, son of the Indian vicar of a rural English parish, was imprisoned for animal mutilation and sending anonymous threatening letters. Arthur Conan Doyle later obtained his exoneration.

20. The Oscar Slater case, Glasgow, 1908. The elderly Marion Gilchrist was battered to death in her flat. Her maid and a neighbor saw the murderer leaving, and the maid identified him as Gilchrist's nephew, a prominent physician. The police rejected her claim and persuaded her instead to identify the German immigrant Oscar Slater, who was sent to prison. Some years later he also was released through the efforts of Conan Doyle.

All these cases have in common a central mystery that has retained its fascination over the decades. In most cases the murderer is unknown, or at least there is insufficient evidence.

But a case does not have to be unsolved to retain its fascination. Lizzie Borden, despite her acquittal, almost certainly killed her parents. The fascination lies in her motive, in the psychology whereby an upright spinster could brutally slaughter two people and retain her aplomb, and certain loose ends in the case make it barely conceivable that she was not guilty (for example, a mysterious man or men seen loitering near the Borden house on the morning of the murders). Frances Hall and her kin perhaps did commit murder, although the evidence was certainly insufficient to convict.

Conversely, legal conviction by no means settles a matter, as the Wallace case shows. Jessie M'Laghlan was probably no more than an accomplice after the fact to a murder committed by an elderly member of the family of her employers, and she may have been completely innocent.

Like other classics, each case possesses certain almost indefinable features that elevate it above the crimes that routinely crowd the mass media. If Elizabeth Canning was not held prisoner by gypsies, neither was she probably simply lying, and no one ever discovered what in fact she was doing for a month. The Gorse Hall case has many fascinating dimensions, including the fact that Storrs expected an attack and probably recognized his killer but refused to identify him with his dying breath, and that witnesses who saw the assailant at close range for some minutes managed to identify two different suspects at different times. (This was possibly the only classic murder case in which two different defendants were both acquitted.)

In the Tichbourne case half the evidence seemed to show that the claimant was genuine, half that he was a fraud. How the Gatton victims were persuaded to enter a dark field remains an enigma, but the case was given immortality by a contemporary hint (probably wrong) that the murderer was another member of the family. The police believed that Evelyn Foster set fire to herself, a belief vehemently rejected by her friends and family.

The Road Hill case involves little mystery—Constance Kent probably did murder her half-brother, out of hatred of her stepmother, although there are intriguing scraps of evidence that point to their father. But it is perhaps the only crime story which of itself rises above the genre and becomes a moving human tragedy, worthy of the artistry of a Greek dramatist.

Some cases fail of being classics simply because there is not enough information, for example, the murder of Sarah Meservy in Tenants Harbor, Maine, in 1877. The middle-aged woman lay strangled in her house for thirty-eight days in a village of only eighty people before her disappearance began to attract notice, and what followed was a carnival of weird anonymous letters and mysterious figures on the beach. A sea captain, Nathan Hart, was arrested and died in prison, but there are many unanswered questions.

The Wallace case remains preeminent in part because it resembles a detective story and

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would have been a worthy challenge to Hercule Poirot. As one commentator put it, if Herbert Wallace was not guilty, the man who committed the murder was a criminal genius and, thanks to the work of Jonathan Goodman and another writer, Roger Wilkes, that genius is now known to have been a man named Gordon Parry, an insurance agent whom Wallace had caught embezzling. Parry managed to lure Wallace away from home, murder Julia, and skillfully arrange the details to make Wallace look guilty. No writer of detective stories has ever produced a more enthralling tale, as conceded by no less an authority than Raymond Chandler, who said, "The Wallace Case is tops. It will always be tops."

The Croydon poisonings also resemble a detective story, set as they were in a small community and involving complex family relationships. Richard Whittington-Egan's book on the subject, *The Riddle of Birdhurst Rise*, is quite interesting but seriously flawed by the fact that he uncritically accepted the views of one of the two surviving natural suspects, who was understandably anxious to incriminate the other.

Crime naturally reflects the style of the age. Victorian London had, besides Jack the Ripper, more than its share of Gaslight Ghouls who could easily be the subject of Christopher Lee films—Dr. Thomas Neill Cream, who looked like a stage villain and stalked the dark streets giving poison pills to prostitutes; Kate Webster, a maid who killed her elderly female employer, rendered her remains, and carried the woman's head around with her in a gladstone bag; and Mary Eleanore Pearcy, who murdered a romantic rival and the woman's infant daughter, placed their bodies in a perambulator, and trundled them for miles through the streets before dumping them at distant locations.

In the same era America provided plots sufficient for a series of Bette Davis-Joan Crawford films: the first woman to die in the electric chair, Martha Place, who hid in a closet and set upon her stepdaughter with vitriol and an axe; Theodore Durrant, who murdered two young women in a San Francisco church, hiding one body in the belfry and placing the other in plain view where the ladies' society would come upon it; and the Wardlaws, three weird but wealthy sisters who drowned a young relative in a bathtub.

Detective-story readers speak of the Golden Age between the two world wars, when the classic pattern of fictional detection was set. Obligingly the age produced its real cases: Elvira Barney, a Mayfair "bright young thing" who shot her lover (an accident, she claimed successfully) amidst stories of sex and drug orgies; Starr Faithfull (her real name), a glamorous but unstable woman found drowned on a Long Island beach; and the Taylor and Elwell cases.

Afficionados of the genre will immediately notice in the above list of classics which old warhorses have been put out to pasture—Dr. Palmer, Madeleine Smith, the Bravo case, Adelaide Bartlett, Florence Maybrick, Dr. Crippen, the Brides in the Bath, the Rattenbury case, the Snyder-Gray case, and the Thompson-Bywaters case, among others.

In most of these cases there is little doubt as to the murderer. Except for Palmer and the Brides in the Bath, each involved a love triangle, which usually does not produce a classic—the motives are too obvious to be intriguing, and the killer often acts under an emotional impulse which prevents dramatic tension from building up. The combination of murder and illicit love is an infallible formula for popularity, but for that very reason it produces cases that are famous mainly for being famous, automatically recycled in every new anthology of crime stories. Such cases are often interesting for what they reveal of the sexual mores of a particular age, but not as crimes in themselves.

Curiously, perhaps the most famous of all cases—Jack the Ripper—does not conform to most of the established rules. Serial killing has become so familiar that today the case would attract little beyond local notice and would be forgotten after a year. That it terrified London for decades and entered the realm of folklore was due in part to something extraneous—letters to the police signed "Jack the Ripper," which may not have been from the killer at all.

The detective story has been called a conservative genre in that it requires that society's laws be enforced. In crime stories, that often does not happen. But in both genres readers have a decided preference for respectable villains—murder in waterfront taverns holds little interest either in fact or in fiction. The purported diary of Jack the Ripper, published in 1993, rather implausibly identifies him as James Maybrick, a Liverpool cotton broker

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who was the victim in a famous poisoning case. (His wife was sent to prison, but he may have poisoned himself.) The authenticity of the book will be long debated, and until it is authenticated the most likely candidate as Jack is an obscure Polish immigrant who died in an asylum, a figure traced by Martin Fido and several other writers. Once it is accepted that the Ripper was not a sophisticated lunatic taunting the public, was not even a respectable attorney, much less Queen Victoria's grandson, a good deal of the inherent interest of the case evaporates.

Yet it has been raised to the level of immortality precisely because of the attention lavished on it. No other case has spawned a full-blown literary industry as the Ripper has—more than a dozen books (most in the past thirty years) written with a remarkable diligence of investigation and attention to detail, each adding at least a few new pieces to the familiar mosaic, every point endlessly scrutinized and debated, making it altogether in some ways the most intriguing of all crime stories, whatever its inherent limits.

Since crime stories are a species of historical writing, they contribute to the stock of historical knowledge in ways not necessarily related to crime, because they give intimate glimpses into people's lives. Legal cases, civil or criminal, force people to reveal the details of their lives in ways they would not normally do, and in ways professional historians seldom bother to record, so that every crime story lays out a small world of customs, relationships, and emotional ties not otherwise accessible—the eating habits of the Borden family, who kept feeding on the same roast of mutton day after day in the stifling August heat; the fact that in Victorian Maine a woman offended by a man's remarks showed her displeasure by pulling up his stiff shirt front (the Meservy case); the ceaseless comings and goings, all night long, of the inhabitants of Victorian East London. Sometimes these cases yield knowledge contrary to logical assumption. Although Elizabeth Canning was a respectable young woman with much public support, London authorities from the beginning determined to give the accused gypsies justice, and they apparently did so. In 1915, for whatever reasons, the citizens of Atlanta preferred to believe that the Jewish factory manager Leo Frank killed a young employee named Mary Phagan rather than the black janitor who probably did it. (Frank was lynched.)

A disappointing conclusion from the study of crime stories is that historically there have been few great detectives. Until the mid-Victorian period there were no detectives at all, although when Godfrey's body was found in 1678, the village Dogberry who took charge of the case showed a certain sophistication in noting salient facts about its location and condition. The most famous English detective of the Victorian era, Jonathan Whicher, was forced into retirement during the Road Hill case when he expressed premature suspicion of Constance Kent. (He was the model for Sergeant Cuff in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone.*) The most famous Scotland Yard detective of the present century was perhaps Walter Dew, who wrote *I Caught Crippen.* But his dramatic capture of the mousy dentist after a transatlantic chase obscured the fact that Dew had originally botched the case, realizing that Crippen had murdered his wife only after the doctor had fled. The Glasgow police framed Oscar Slater, and in two English cases—Wallace and Edalji—the police willfully ignored evidence of innocence.

The greatest policemen have done well against professional criminals, but no actual detective had a brilliant record of solving "mere" crimes. (Eliot Ness, who performed so sensationally against Chicago gangsters, failed a few years later to solve the murders perpetrated in Cleveland by the Mad Butcher of Kingsbury Run.) Except for Conan Doyle, there has also never been an important case solved by a brilliant amateur. Perhaps the lone giant in the field of detection was the English pathologist Bernard Spilsbury, who testified in dozens of cases beginning with Crippen in 1910 and whom juries believed to be infallible.

Criminal fame is an unstable thing, the greatest professional criminals, like Al Capone, almost always becoming better known than the leading amateurs. Probably everyone has heard of Jack the Ripper, due mainly to the macabre name itself; and the ditty about Lizzie Borden's giving her mother forty whacks has helped insure her immortality. But probably few of the readers of the *New York Times* who used to rely on the detective story reviews of H. H. Holmes were aware that this was the pseudonym of Herman Webster Mudgett, perhaps America's greatest mass

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murderer (c. 1900) and Gaslight Ghoul of the first rank. (In Chicago he built a "murder castle" that included secret gas pipes, chutes, and dissecting rooms by which he could murder his female guests and dispose of their bodies.) So also Belle Gunness, the Indiana farmer of the same era, is largely unknown despite being perhaps America's greatest female mass murderer. (She lured men by matrimonial advertisements, then she killed them for their money and buried their bodies on her farm.)

Almost all the names here cited, including the entire list of classics, are Anglo-Saxons, predominantly English. In part this may be the stereotypical contrast between a snugly prosaic environment and the cheerful English character on the one hand and shocking evil on the other, a contrast that seems less pronounced in other national images. But the main reason is practical—accounts of crimes on the European Continent, much less outside the Western world, are very difficult to find in America, and any attempt to consider them comprehensively would inevitably fail.

Devotees of crime stories, unlike readers of detective stories, are often charged with having a taste for gore, presumably because most fictional murders are rather antiseptic. The charge, however, is unfair.

As in fiction, not all actual murders are bloody—the Croydon poisoning is among the most fascinating of cases—and the interest of a case does not rise in proportion to its brutality.

Strictly speaking there is no need for a criminal case to involve murder at all. A stolen penny might prove intriguing in terms of motives and methods, and in some ways disappearances are more intriguing than murders, since there is still another layer of mystery—whether the victim was or was not killed. (The most famous American disappearance, that of Judge Joseph Crater of New York in 1931, is omitted here because it was probably the work of professional criminals.) The Edalji case involved no crime worse than animal mutilation. Most of its fascination comes from the blood-curdlingly insane letters that the perpetrator sent to various people. The fate of the *Mary Celeste* may not have involved criminal action at all.

But the crime devotee must also admit that the quantity of blood is not wholly irrelevant, because brutal murders by seemingly ordinary people are more intriguing than other kinds. Lizzie Borden apparently tried to poison her parents, and had she succeeded she would probably now be forgotten. The extreme horror of her deed, in contrast to her own impeccable respectability, is what draws the spectator in and arouses curiosity about the hidden recesses of human nature.

As noted, until after World War I there was no proper literature of crime—both Jack the Ripper and Lizzie Borden waited decades for real books on their cases. In some ways Pearson, Roughead, and Lustgarten were giants, but, as with other art forms, tastes were far different in their day. None of them did original research; they relied mainly on court testimony and newspaper accounts. Their purpose was frankly to entertain, which meant frequent witticisms, clever phrases, and a supercilious approach to the subject that suggested that both victim and perpetrator were rather ridiculous, an approach that allowed writers like James Thurber and Ring Lardner also to try their hands at the genre. (*The New Yorker*'s St. Claire McKelway, who recorded "Annals of Crime," was interested mainly in professionals.) They seem to have been catering to readers who felt slightly uneasy at indulging what they felt was a prurient interest and who could justify it, as the crime writer Colin Wilson has suggested, by taking an attitude of superiority to the subject.

In a sense the "serious" approach to crime was pioneered by Conan Doyle, who researched and wrote detailed works on several cases in order to argue, successfully, the innocence of those convicted of the crimes.

The quality of crime writing has never been higher than in the last two decades, with Goodman, Bernard Taylor, Fido, and a number of others whose approach tends to be straightforward, detailed, factual, and meticulous, aimed at a solution to the mystery and not merely at an entertaining tale.

An honor roll of crime stories would include the following:

1. Bernard Taylor, *Cruelly Murdered.* A work worthy of its subject, the Road Hill murder.

2. Victoria Lincoln, *A Private Disgrace: Lizzie Borden by Daylight.* A gripping and insightful book by a novelist who as a young girl knew the aged Lizzie by sight and understood the subtleties of Fall River society.

3. Jonathan Goodman, *The Killing of Julia*

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Wallace. A skillfully told account of the classic case, along with what is certainly the definitive solution.

4. John Dickson Carr, *The Murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey.* An excursion by a detective novelist into the world of true crime, and a work of literary distinction. It should be supplemented by Stephen Knight's *The Killing of Justice Berry Godfrey,* which includes important new evidence.

5. Jonathan Goodman, *The Stabbing of George Harry Storrs.* An enthralling account of the neglected Gorse Hall case.

6. P. D. James and T. A. Critchley, *The Maul and the Pear Tree.* Another venture by a successful detective novelist into the field of true crime, in this case the Ratcliffe Highway murders in London in 1811, when burglars murdered two families in their homes a week apart.

7. James and Desmond Gibney, *The Gatton Mystery.* Publication of this book in an English series rescued this classic Australian crime from total oblivion in the northern hemisphere.

8. Sidney D. Kirkpatrick, *A Cast of Killers.* Fascinating account of the murder of William Desmond Taylor, based in part on the investigations of the film producer King Vidor.

9. William Kunstler, *The Minister and the Choir Singer.* The only comprehensive account of the Hall-Mills Case, although his solution lacks evidence and seems unlikely.

10. Christina Brand, *Heaven Knows Who.* A detective novelist's graceful account of the Sandyford Murder.

Not every great crime has produced its classic book. At least a half dozen of the books on Jack the Ripper are of high quality, but the field changes so quickly that none can be singled out, and the New Orleans axeman, on the whole a far more sinister figure than the Ripper but far less notorious, has never been the subject of a book. On the other hand, James and Critchley's investigations into the Ratcliffe Highway murders is a model of the genre far beyond the somewhat prosaic (by today's standards) nature of the crimes.

The omission of Colin Wilson from this list of honor requires justification, because no one has written more extensively about historic crime. Wilson sometimes shows brilliance, but his theories are usually too eccentric and speculative to be entirely helpful.

The great crime books of sixty years ago—Pearson, Roughead, Lustgarten—were the expatiations of gifted amateurs aiming to be amusing or provocative. The best crime writers today are historians, and they approach their tasks in that spirit. On the whole they succeed, and indeed their diligence, their ingenuity, and their thoroughness would shame many professional historians. Where they tend to fail, as might be expected, is in the larger historical generalizations—vague allusions to "Victorian hypocrisy" are a staple of crime writers trying to make their work "significant."

In general crime stories do not yield such significance and, while they do not lack historical meaning, it is seldom the kind that can be readily generalized. Writers with an ideological purpose tend to obscure as much as they enlighten, and William Kunstler's Hall-Mills book does not depend on his radical political philosophy. For post-1945 crimes the genre has been taken in new directions by Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* and Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song.*

Those who develop a taste for crime stories may after a time want to swim on their own by plunging into the Notable British Trials Series, for which there is no American equivalent. Here it is possible actually to become the detective through close attention to what witnesses had to say, straining to see aspects of the case that others have missed. This distinguished series, now defunct, was spotty, however, including some relatively uninteresting cases and omitting a number of others, such as Herbert Wallace and Constance Kent.

All the classic works above are books devoted to a single subject, which the genre absolutely requires. Given the fact that no one can be certain which facts are relevant to the crime, and given the author's obligation to be fair to the reader, crime writers should always err on the side of too much information rather than too little, so that even long essays are usually insufficient. (This in itself excludes most of the work of the trio of Pearson-Roughead-Lustgarten.)

Like most historical writing, crime stories tend to go through three phases—the first in which the author states what seems obvious (Pearson's *The Trial of Lizzie Borden*), the revisionist phase in which the errors of the first author are exposed and a new solution proposed (Edward Radin's *Lizzie Borden: The Un-*

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told Story), and the post-revisionist phase which accepts the revisionist criticisms, points out their limitations, and offers a modified version of the original thesis (Lincoln's *A Private Disgrace*). The fascination of the Jack the Ripper Case lies partly in the fact that it has not followed this dialectic but has continued to lead in new and unexpected directions.

Omitted from the list of classics is one of America's most famous cases, the Black Dahlia Murder in Los Angeles in 1947, when the torso of a young woman was found on a vacant lot; she had been dismembered somewhere else after lengthy torture. The victim was Elizabeth Short, called the Black Dahlia after her style of dress.

The case marks the beginning of the modern era—the fact that the mutilations involved sadism and were not merely an attempt to hide the victim's identity; the fact that the murderer taunted the police by sending them the victim's personal papers; and the social context in which the deed took place—Short was an unsuccessful aspirant to film stardom, was estranged from her family in Massachusetts, and moved in the rootless circles of southern California in wartime and its direct aftermath. Modern killers have often been more brutal than most of their predecessors, and they have found it increasingly easy to carry on their work.

Classic crimes are indeed emotions recollected in tranquillity, like yellowed photographs or insects forever trapped in amber—fascinating and still capable of inducing a shiver, but safely quarantined from the viewer's emotional world, no longer able to provoke real terror.

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"I call it back . . . "

FREDERICK MORGAN

I call it back, that cold midnight long past:
dark sky with cloud shapes, here and there a star,
the air freezing my lungs. I wore no overcoat
as whistling to myself "Blues in the Night"
I crossed the chill quadrangles edged with snow.

I tried to see ahead. What would the years,
so darkly clouded, bring me? First, the War
with all its cruel rituals of loss—
the horror that had overhung my youth
full-blown at last and ready to devour.

But at its distant end, if I survived,
might I not repossess the life I'd loved?
All ignorant, I thought it possible
and kept the hope clutched tightly through the long
disjunction and distress which I endured.

In vain, of course. The past is past retrieve,
and newer loves and griefs would intervene
dividing me from all I thought I'd known
until it seemed the boy of long ago
had been forsaken with his useless dreams . . .

But just last night, in the dark-lit restaurant,
as candles dimmed and you and I sat musing,
there in the gloom they played that tune again—
and I felt his presence, purged and strangely new,
in this long future suddenly at hand.

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Auden at the Opera

ALAN JACOBS

W. H. AUDEN AND CHESTER KALLMAN: LIBRETTI AND OTHER DRAMATIC WRITINGS BY W. H. AUDEN, 1939–1973. *Edited by Edward Mendelson.* (The Complete Works of W. H. Auden, Volume 2.) *Princeton University Press. $35.*

Throughout his career, W. H. Auden considered it bad news to hear that someone was writing about his poetry, but in 1963, Monroe Spears surprised him by producing a critical study of which he approved. "No author could hope for a more conscientious and generous consideration of his work," he wrote to Spears after seeing the proofs, and he added this comment: "I am particularly pleased that you seem to perceive, what I hoped was there, a continuity and development of an outlook on the world, not a succession of unrelated ideologies." Auden's conviction of his "continuity" of purpose and concern has rarely been endorsed by his critics, who tend to emphasize a dramatic change in his life and work that occurred around 1940. And with good reason, when one considers what happened to Auden and his world in just less than two years.

In January 1939, he moved to America; in the spring of 1939, he met and fell in love with Chester Kallman and through Kallman discovered opera; in September 1939, war in Europe began; in (or by) October 1940, he returned to Christian belief and the Anglican church; in May 1941, the operetta *Paul Bunyan* was first performed (music by Benjamin Britten, libretto by Auden—his first); in July 1941, he learned of, and was emotionally devastated by, Kallman's infidelity, which effectively ended their sexual relationship; and in August 1941, his mother, whom he loved deeply, died.

Surely, critics argue, these dramatic changes, especially when considered in their cumulative effect, produced a very different Auden than the poetic hero of the thirties. Indeed they did; and yet Auden's claims to continuity of development are equally valid. For, these upheavals in his life, and in the world around him, enabled him to see more clearly the direction his thought and his work had already been headed for some years; such insight in turn enabled him to pursue that direction with more conscious determination and with, as the years went by, a remarkable imperviousness to the protests of his increasingly disappointed or outraged critics.

It may seem rather odd to find a mention of Auden's discovery of opera embedded in this list of personal and political "upheavals." But nothing would be more constant in the remaining thirty years of Auden's life than his love of opera and his dedication to writing for it. While his relationship with Chester Kallman and his Christian faith each had their times of trial, and eventually metamorphosed into forms the Auden of 1941 could scarcely have anticipated, the peculiar "world of opera," as he called it, would retain a stable and important place in his life and work.

This is not an inference one would draw from reading the critical literature on Auden,

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which typically ignores his libretti; but then, few of these libretti have ever been readily available in a reliable text. Moreover, even those who know the libretti have sometimes been hesitant to write about them because most were produced in collaboration with Kallman, and disentangling individual contributions from composite authorship is, by internal evidence alone, virtually impossible. Some have solved that problem simply by assuming that the passages in the libretti they liked were written by Auden, since he was a great and famous poet, and those they disliked by Kallman, since he was a great and famous poet's "companion." In fact, their attributions tended more often than not to be wrong, which enraged Auden. (Kallman is unlikely to have been happy about them either.)

Now that Edward Mendelson, Auden's literary executor, has published the second volume of Auden's complete works, which contains all the libretti along with Auden's other dramatic writings from 1939 to 1973, this awkward situation may be on its way to being remedied. The editing here—as in the previous volume, which contains Auden's dramatic writings, including his collaborations with Christopher Isherwood, through 1938—is thorough, precise, and tactful, a model of editorial expertise, not least in its unobtrusive yet extensive apparatus. Mendelson has provided readers not only with reliable texts of all the libretti (plus significant variants), but also with detailed accounts of their composition, and careful reconstructions, whenever possible, of each partner's specific responsibilities. What emerges above all from a reading of Mendelson's volume is the conviction that Auden devoted his full talent to the task of producing words for music. At least one of these works (*The Rake's Progress*, written for Stravinsky) clearly deserves to be called a masterpiece, and two others (*Elegy for Young Lovers* and *The Bassarids*, both written for the German composer Hans Werner Henze) lay some claim to that stature. Our current understanding of Auden will be changed, perhaps in dramatic ways, by full consideration of these libretti.

Yet the composite authorship continues to pose problems for the critic or reviewer, if not necessarily for the reader. Thanks to Mendelson, we now have a pretty good idea of the way Auden and Kallman divided their work, and it appears that in most of the libretti Kallman wrote most of the words. But we do not know that Kallman played as great a role in designing and constructing the narratives. The general outline for the *Rake* was laid out by Auden with the help of Stravinsky at a time when Auden had not yet recruited Kallman as a partner. And *Elegy for Young Lovers* treats so many characteristically Audenesque themes that one cannot help suspecting that he was the primary architect of the work, even though about three-quarters of the words were written by Kallman. Moreover, since Auden and Kallman lived together much of the time, who knows how thoroughly they discussed and edited each other's work? Clearly it would not be wise to think of any particular passage or scene as belonging wholly to one or the other author. Auden and Kallman once wrote, "In a literary collaboration, if it is to be successful, the partners to it must surrender the selves they would be if they were writing separately and become one new author; though, obviously, any given passage must be written by one of them, the censor-critic who decides what will or will not do is this corporate personality." With this warning in mind, then, it is tempting to designate, using the partners' initials, the composite author of these libretti as Whack. But some temptations are worth resisting.

Putting aside Whack for the moment, let us return to the question of continuity in Auden's work and note three concerns that would occupy Auden's attention from the mid-1930s until his death in 1973.

First, almost from the beginning, Auden craves a social function for poetry. In 1938 he would look back with an Eliotic nostalgia upon periods in English history when poets "felt in sufficient intimacy with their audience to be able to forget themselves and their singing-robes," and thus were able to write "poetry which [was] simple, clear, and gay." In 1956, in his inaugural lecture as Professor of Poetry at Oxford, Auden would say, "I should be feeling less uneasy at this moment than I do, if the duties of the Professor of Poetry were to produce, as occasion should demand, an epithalamium for the nuptials of a Reader in Romance Languages, an elegy on a deceased Canon of Christ Church, a May-day Masque for Somerville or an election ballad for his successor." He wasn't kidding; the idea of the poet-as-public-servant was appealing to him as

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the very opposite of the conception of the poetic vocation that he most loathed, Shelley's "unacknowledged legislators of the world." There is something rather comic about this situation: his fellow poets and intellectuals repeatedly reminded Auden that he was a god, in part because he so conspicuously failed to act like one; but *he* longed to be a more or less anonymous member of Olympus's domestic staff. (It must be allowed, however, that his fondness for P. G. Wodehouse's serenely domineering Jeeves suggests that, as a cultural valet, he would have played some considerable role in shaping the character of his masters.)

Second, for Auden, the Romantic tradition's emphasis on the priority of aesthetic experience is emotionally indulgent and hence ethically dubious. His conviction that aesthetic feeling must be mastered goes back to his early childhood, when his great fascination was lead mining and he would spend hours at a time constructing imaginary ideal mines (his "private sacred world"). "As I was planning my Platonic Idea of a concentrating mill," he wrote late in life, "I ran into difficulties. I had to choose between two types of a certain machine for separating the slimes, called a buddle. One type I found more sacred or 'beautiful,' but the other type was, as I knew from my reading, more efficient. At this point I realized that it was my moral duty to sacrifice my aesthetic preference to reality or truth. . . . When, later, I began to write poetry, I found that, for me at least, the same obligation was binding."

Third, related to this conviction are Auden's suspicion of the purely lyrical in poetry and his correspondent preference for mixed forms and genres. Most of Auden's more lyrical passages come in poems that distance the effusion through the use of narrative or drama: he could give language to characters that he would hesitate to use in poems which featured, or seemed to feature, his own voice. This mixing of genres is always evident in his longer works, which contain prose dialogue, contrapuntal choruses, letters, journals, and sermons, along with, and often in direct juxtaposition to, an astonishing range of rhymes, meters, and stanzaic forms.

In light of these three tendencies in Auden's thought and work, the only question about his fascination with the opera is why it didn't happen earlier. After an early exposure to at least some music of Wagner, he seems, despite a deep love for music and considerable musical literacy, to have ignored opera altogether until he met Kallman. (When he was a small child, his mother taught him the love duet from *Tristan und Isolde*, which the two of them would sing together. One wonders whether his father—one of the first English physicians to make practical use of Freudian psychoanalytic theory—ever saw such performances and, if so, what he thought about them.) Perhaps the emotional extravagance of opera—about which more presently—was at first uncongenial to a man who sought so consistently to achieve emotional discipline.

In the event, writing opera libretti had the immediate effect of enabling Auden to become the servant he wanted to be: he repeatedly insisted on the subordinate role of the librettist to the composer. "The first duty of the librettist is, needless to say, to write verses which excite the musical imagination of the composer; if these verses should also possess poetic merit in themselves, so much the better, but such merit is a secondary consideration." Such was the feeling of Auden and Kallman upon the American premiere of the *Rake* in 1953. Earlier Auden had claimed that the librettist's words "are as expendable as infantry to a Chinese general," a simile he clearly relished, considering the frequency with which he used it. But he also said, in a letter to Henze about *The Bassarids*, that he and Kallman wanted their libretto to be *printed* as written, however many cuts and alterations it would ultimately undergo on the road to performance. Let the Chinese generals do what they may, the mothers of these infantrymen want their children brought back home once the battle is over.

As for the second tendency, when Auden wrote of his duty to sacrifice his aesthetic preferences to practical utility, his problem was not how to eradicate the emotions but rather how to find a proper place for their expression. Writing for the opera solved this problem beautifully, because emotional extravagance is virtually its raison d'être: in this case it was Auden's unequivocal duty to *unleash*, rather than restrain, the emotional resources of poetic language. Thus the young lovers of the *Elegy*, Toni and Elizabeth, can and should sing this imitation folk song to a departing friend:

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A stream runs down the valley,
A mill-wheel spins away,
It grinds the precious flower
Of love both night and day.

But now the wheel is broken
And love is at an end
And two who walked together
By different roads will wend.

Give me your hand; who ever
Believed that we should part,
Or summer change to winter
And light to heavy heart?

Can a card-carrying modernist take such a phrase as "the precious flower / Of love" seriously? The whole song could fairly be called lugubrious, in an adolescent sort of way: the last two stanzas in particular are a pure pastiche of Housman, whom Auden thought the great poet of male adolescence. But in the full operatic context, such emotional intensity and apparent overemphasis are proper; anything less would be insufficient. "Opera is the last refuge of the High style" in poetry, Auden wrote, and has no need for the Low. Moreover, if the music is good enough, the audience will believe without qualification in the validity of the emotions represented. (Auden once saw, in the same week, a performance of Wagner's *Tristan* and Jean Cocteau's cinematic adaptation of the story, *L' Eternal Retour.* "During the former," he reported, "two souls, weighing over two hundred pounds apiece, were transfigured by a transcendent power; in the latter, a handsome boy met a beautiful girl and they had an affair.") Now, any given opera as a whole need not accept without question the validity of these emotions: "the crowning glory of opera is the big ensemble," because such an ensemble provides the necessary context for situating each aria or duet. But each aria or duet, *as it is being sung,* commands our complete assent: as long as Toni and Elizabeth are singing, since it is virtually impossible to sing ironically, there is no call for ironic references to callow Housmanesque melancholia. The librettists' words should encourage this assent rather than fight against it: thus the need in opera for a florid and emotionally extravagant style, even if poetry on the page calls for something quite different.

Similarly, Auden's love of mixed literary genres finds a new outlet in the opera, which not only combines prose and verse in its words, but further combines those words with music and spectacle (*lexis* with *melos* and *opsis,* as Aristotle says in the *Poetics*—and the tragedies he knew were, in performance, considerably closer to Verdi than to Ibsen). The constantly shifting importance of these elements, not only from opera to opera, but from moment to moment *within* an opera, resonates profoundly with Auden's resistance to any genre, and any system of thought, that too precisely defines, too rigidly excludes, too methodically organizes.

This volume contains, by Auden solo, his first foray into libretto writing, the Broadway-musical-cum-operetta version of the Paul Bunyan story that he produced for Benjamin Britten in 1941; two radio plays; a "liturgical drama"; two narrations for film; and various bits and pieces, including the lyrics he wrote for *Man of La Mancha* before being replaced by a lyricist more properly oriented to the demands of Broadway. All of it is interesting, but the Auden-Kallman libretti are clearly the most important works that Mendelson has collected here, and, among them, the three mentioned earlier stand out.

Of these three the best known is *The Rake's Progress,* largely because of Stravinsky's great presence. Indeed, it seems to me that no modern opera is more wholly satisfying in its combination of words and music, its chief rivals being the Strauss-Hofmannsthal collaborations. What Auden and Kallman saw in Hogarth's nearly skeletal story (in only eight engravings) of the Rake, who descends into dissolute living and eventually madness, was a potentially mythic pattern that Auden always insisted was necessary to great opera: Don Giovanni, Figaro, Norma, Falstaff—all are characters who, in Auden's view, step out of history and represent permanently compelling archetypes. Kallman made a major contribution to the mythic dimension of the story by giving Tom Rakewell three wishes—wishes granted, of course, by Mephistopheles in the guise of Tom's servant Nick Shadow. Tom is likewise provided with a guardian angel in the person of his fiancée, Anne Trulove, which threatens to make the whole story a little too symmetrical, almost caricatural of the eighteenth-century preference for balance and order. But

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The 1993 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science

LIVING WITHIN LIMITS: ECOLOGY, ECONOMICS, AND POPULATION TABOOS. *Garrett Hardin. Oxford University Press. $25.*

Citation: According to a long-established tradition, literature and science share a common devotion to truth: literature for the truth of human experience, science for the truth of the objective laws of the world in which that experience is shaped. In his book *Living Within Limits,* Garrett Hardin merges these two concerns in a trenchant, learned, passionate analysis of the most difficult problem that confronts mankind since the threat of nuclear annihilation has dwindled: the threat of an apparently inevitable human overpopulation of the earth. His analysis is not comfortable nor comforting nor edifying. It brings forward all the issues involved—economic, social, religious, technological—and it speaks of them in terms that cannot be assimilated into political slogans or media soundbites. It presses forward in the sharpest form the claims of a morality of consequences as opposed to a morality of motives. *Living Within Limits* is a rich and subtle book, which is immensely enjoyable because it liberates us from taboos of speaking frankly about real and urgent problems without sentimentality or propaganda.

The Christian Gauss Award

TO WAKE THE NATIONS: RACE IN THE MAKING OF AMERICAN LITERATURE. *Eric J. Sundquist. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. $29.95.*

Citation: Eric J. Sundquist's *To Wake the Nations* is a critical study of enormous range that offers what must be one of the most significant revisions of American literary history to appear in some time with its attention to the impact of race on the writings of both African Americans and European Americans. His account of the impact of Africa America on the literary forms of white culture provides a fresh angle on classic American literature. Professor Sundquist has an impressive knowledge of African American folklore and what he has to say about each of the figures he examines is original and significant. *To Wake the Nations* is a landmark of criticism that will influence the study and teaching of American literature for years to come.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

PROTECTING SOLDIERS AND MOTHERS: THE POLITICAL ORIGINS OF SOCIAL POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES. *Theda Skocpol. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. $34.95.*

Citation: *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* is well written, clearly argued, exhaustively researched, and broad-ranging in its analytic scope. Professor Skocpol marshals an enormous amount of empirical data and then controls it within an analytic framework. She does this while maintaining a clear narrative line. She has mastered the relevant historical and sociological literature, and she introduces cross-cultural comparisons, displaying a strong sense of historical context. The book is engaging and wholly accessible to the intelligent general reader. Rarely have sociology and history been so ably combined. In *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* Theda Skocpol shows that fundamental change can sometimes be brought about outside the framework of standard political institutions. This book will force scholars to look at a particular historical period in a new way and perhaps to look at history in general from a new perspective.

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Auden and Kallman avert this fate by their most brilliant stroke, the introduction of Baba the Turk, the Circus's Bearded Woman, whom Tom marries. Tom, who has no interest in Baba, is tempted by Nick Shadow to marry her. Nick tells Tom that only by such an *acte gratuité* can he demonstrate true freedom and autonomy. This wry poke at existentialism is made dramatically effective when Baba struts onto the stage: she carries herself with all the dignity of a great artist—like a Tosca projected back a hundred years—and is utterly vain about her glorious beard. (A famous Auden aphorism: " 'After all,' sighed Narcissus the hunchback, 'on *me* it looks good.' ") Similarly, while the libretto takes full advantage of the eighteenth century's penchant for moralism, the concluding scene, in which the mad and dying Tom is reconciled to Anne, though too late to save his life, echoes the reunion of Lear and Cordelia. Thus the generally reserved and measured ambience of the opera sometimes yields, and with great effect, to an emotional openness and dramatic intensity not normally associated with classicism. This is altogether appropriate, since fully realized myths, as Auden conceived of them, partake both of orderly pattern and of tragic depth.

Auden and Kallman's commitment to the archetypal in opera was put at risk when they decided to write *Elegy for Young Lovers.* Auden believed that the setting of an *opera seria* required some historical distance in order to achieve its properly mythical quality. Having defined "mythical situations" as "situations which, as human beings, we are all of us necessarily in and must, therefore, accept, however tragic they may be," he remarks: "A contemporary tragic situation like that in Menotti's *The Consul* is too actual, that is, too clearly a situation some people are in and others, including the audience, are not in, for the latter to forget this and see it as a symbol of, say, man's existential estrangement. Consequently the pleasure we and the singers are obviously enjoying strikes the conscience as frivolous." The *Elegy* is not precisely contemporary (written in 1960, it is set in 1910), but both its period and its physical setting are reminiscent of *The Magic Mountain,* and its key themes are profoundly and particularly modern—or, to be precise, post-Romantic, for the libretto is concerned above all with the elevation of art to quasi-sacred status. Auden and Kallman had in

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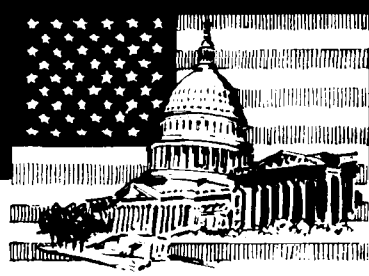

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mind, when they began this project, Yeats's famous couplet: "The intellect of man is forced to choose / Perfection of the life or of the work." They operate under the full awareness that many Romantic and modern artists have chosen the latter: as William Faulkner once said when contemplating the relative merits of a great poem and his grandmother, "the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' is worth any number of old ladies." Clearly Mittenhofer, the poet who dominates the *Elegy*, shares this view, as can be seen in his relentless manipulation of everyone around him in order to achieve artistic greatness. The story that emerges from this theme seems to me a fascinating one, and Auden in particular wrote some beautiful verse for it, but this historical particularity means that what Auden said about Menotti's *The Consul* applies in equal measure to his own *Elegy*. (Auden and Kallman, it should be noted, were fully aware of this problem but believed that their story was nonetheless "a genuine myth because the lack of identity between Goodness and Beauty, between the character of a man and the character of his creations, is a permanent aspect of the human condition." But, while this is a problem for artists, it is hard to see that it has the archetypal resonance of *Don Giovanni* or even of *The Rake's Progress*.)

Moreover, even the characters who do achieve, or come close to achieving, the archetypal resonance the librettists sought—most notably the aforementioned Toni and Elizabeth—are rendered with more depth and complexity than is easily, or perhaps at all, representable in the operatic medium. Of the scene in which, just before their deaths, they realize that they are not in love with each other after all, Auden later commented: "This scene, for which, incidentally, I was responsible, will not do at all and must some day be completely rewritten. To my fond eye it reads well and might be effective in a spoken verse play. But for opera it is far too literary and complicated in the argument, far too dependent upon every word being heard, to get across when set to music." This evaluation seems to me wholly just, and not only for this one scene but for the whole libretto. *Elegy for Young Lovers* reads marvelously well on the page and deserves in this form to be considered along with Auden's finest individual work; but as a libretto, which is how it should primarily be judged, it does not wholly succeed, if largely because of its great ambition.

The Bassarids is, if anything, more ambitious still. It keeps pretty close to Euripides' story, though it dramatizes some action merely related by Dionysus at the beginning of the old play and adds a "comic intermezzo" based on the Bacchants' activities as imagined by the sexually repressed and obsessed Pentheus. Pentheus here is particularly interesting: Auden and Kallman present him as a convert to Platonic idealism and rationalism who attempts, on these philosophical grounds—and with tragic results—not just to discipline but to eradicate the life of feeling celebrated and exaggerated by Dionysus. Given Auden's commitment to emotional discipline, the libretto stands as a warning to at least one of its authors—as did *Elegy for Young Lovers*, whose chief character, the poet Mittenhofer, represents what Auden might have become, had he taken his admirers more seriously. Likewise, Pentheus exemplifies the vengeance the emotions can exact upon one who would demean them (a danger Auden seemed especially aware of in his later years and perhaps helped to avert by writing libretti).

But this is just one level of the story. Auden and Kallman transform *The Bacchae* into a kind of personification allegory of religious beliefs and attitudes, with each of the characters representing a historically recurrent position: Agave is a skeptic "inclined to mockery"; Tiresias (costumed as an Anglican archdeacon) a devotee of "the latest thing in religious fashion"; and so on. Moreover, Auden believed that the story had a certain explanatory power for people living in the aftermath of two world wars. "For the nineteenth century the myth was moribund," because of the belief that "social and intellectual progress have made it impossible for anything of the kind ever to occur again"; but "today we know only too well that it is as possible for whole communities to become demonically possessed as it is for individuals to go off their heads."

One can see the connection between Pentheus's philosophical-religious position and his sexual repression: he is trying to ascend the Socratic *scala amoris* toward higher forms of love, and he wishes to leave the body and its desires behind. His ultimate destruction shows the price to be paid for such repression. But everyone else is destroyed, too, or else humili-

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ated and mocked. This bears some reflection. Like Euripides, Auden and Kallman leave us with the impression that the only possible response to Dionysus is abject submission, not because he is righteous but because he is almighty. However, unlike Euripides, Auden and Kallman bring to the foreground, in the person of Agave, open contempt for such a god. Euripides' Agave speaks briefly of Dionysus's "strange tyranny," but at the very end she wishes only to forget that she ever served him. Auden, however, gives her these blunt and powerful final words:

> You have done your worst, Dionysus:
> Now I need fear you no more.
> In this hour of your triumph, I say this,
> Say it not only to you
> But to Zeus and all on Olympus:
> Think of the altarless Fates.
> Where is gelded Uranus? Or Chronos,
> Once an invincible God?
> Rape, torture, and kill while you can: one
> Tartarus waits for you all.

That Auden at least (it is hard to be sure about Kallman) did not believe this picture of deity to be a true one is perhaps indicated by the libretto's epigraph, from Gottfried Benn: "*Die Mythe log*" (The myth lied). And, says Mendelson, "in conversation Auden spoke of *The Bacchae* as *The Magic Flute* [a story in which tragedy is narrowly averted] without Christianity." It seems clear that in *The Bassarids* Dionysus is Satan, who possesses people and drives them to self-destruction or the destruction of others—as is evident in the careers of Stalin and Hitler, the latter of whom Auden once, famously, called a "psychopathic god" (though he told Henze that only "fools" would *equate* his Dionysus with Hitler). But in that case where is the Christian God in whom Auden believed? Does He leave us no choice but to submit to Satan, whom Jesus called "the Prince of this world"? If Auden and Kallman had not made significant changes in the original tragedy, these questions would not present themselves so insistently; but by making such changes, and by identifying the importance of the story for the modern world, the librettists compel us to ask just how far the comparison can be pushed. Given this and other puzzles, *The Bassarids* cannot be called the most fully realized work in the Auden canon; but doubtless it is one of the most powerful and provocative.

I have treated each of these three major libretti individually and at some length because they are little known and deserve to be better known. They do demonstrate, as Auden would be pleased to hear, the continuity of his poetic and intellectual development; but at the same time they provide an interesting case study of the way the discovery of a new genre can enable a poet genuinely to develop, and not just to persist in old patterns. Those readers of Auden who find his later poetry disappointing—frowning as they do upon the light, the occasional, and the technically sophisticated in verse—would do well to read these libretti before passing judgment on the whole oeuvre of the poet: they may discover that Auden did not cease to be (even according to their categories) a "serious" writer in his later years, but rather found a new, and to many of us unfamiliar, arena in which to exercise his mind and art. Edward Mendelson has done us all a great service in putting these fascinating works before us; from now on, we will be able to see a great poet more fully, more vividly, and more justly.

The House Dandy

DISRAELI: A BIOGRAPHY. *By Stanley Weintraub. Dutton. $30.*

Reviewed by JACOB A. STEIN

Somerset Maugham in *The Summing Up* said that famous men "show the world a mask, often an impressive one, but take care to conceal their real selves. They play the part that is expected from them, and with practice learn to play it very well, but you are stupid if you think that this public performance of theirs corresponds with the man within."

Such people challenge a biographer to get at a fair and penetrating estimate of the real person. Each successive biographer adds facts that the preceding biographer missed, in the

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belief that the accumulation of fact will solve the mystery. Among these so-called facts are the false clues and props premeditatedly scattered around to obstruct and mislead the biographer. The Kennedy legend, so carefully prepared and well funded during the president's lifetime, now continues under its own momentum, undeflected by fact or fiction.

We can add to President Kennedy's name the names of two additional public figures who remain enigmatic despite repeated biographies. These are Franklin D. Roosevelt and David Lloyd George. Their distinguishing characteristics are the relentless pursuit of power; the use of misdirection and disguise; a taste for touching up the historical record; and the presence of strong admirers and violent enemies who draw opposite conclusions from identical events. One side discovers an evil genius, the other side finds a benevolent pursuer of the public good. A biographer of Lloyd George asks how one explains and interprets the magic without being mesmerized by the spell.

Benjamin Disraeli's career presents all of this multiplied by ten and highlighted in hues of purple and primrose yellow. And now he is here, yet again, the subject of another substantial biography, Stanley Weintraub's *Disraeli: A Biography*. In partial explanation, Mr. Weintraub says in his preface:

> The first life of Disraeli had already been written by 1859; this one will not be the last. Compelling figures who have made a difference in the world will be put under the biographers' lens again and again.

Mr. Weintraub is not explicit on why he decided to write a Disraeli biography. Hesketh Pearson, an earlier Disraeli biographer, described what triggered his own decision:

> The mere fact that a Jew should become the chosen leader of a landed aristocracy in a period of snobbish exclusiveness was evocative enough, but added to that his wit delighted me and his mysterious aloofness intrigued me. He was one of the very few people whose name in the index of a book always made me turn to the page on which he was mentioned or quoted.

The expansion of that one paragraph with names, dates, and places is what every Disraeli biography comes down to, whether it runs to six volumes or the one-volume impressionistic study that Pearson turned out.

Benjamin Disraeli was born in 1804 of Jewish parents. Until 1858 Parliament excluded practicing Jews. Politics was a career closed to Disraeli until the diagram of destiny first appears. Disraeli's father, Isaac, was a dilettante literary man of inherited means. His *Curiosities of Literature* is still to be seen today, bound in green leather, in bookstores catering to interior decorators who stock the bookshelves of the rich but culturally insecure. Isaac became embroiled in a synagogue quarrel. Such quarrels are not unique events. There are a number of cities in the world where factional synagogues confront each other on opposite sides of the same street. Disraeli's father retaliated against his synagogue, but not by leaving with his faction. Choosing a more dramatic retaliation, he had his son Benjamin baptized into the Church of England.

Disraeli got most of his schooling in his father's library. In time he astonished his auditors with his breadth of disorganized erudition of the kind characteristic of the autodidact. He attended neither Oxford nor Cambridge, the forcing house of most British political leaders.

In his late teens we find him experimenting with a career as a lawyer. The experiment was not a success. In Disraeli's first novel, *Vivian Grey*, his hero remarks, "To be a great lawyer I must give up my chance of being a great man." Disraeli made another comment concerning lawyers by referring to a distinguished legal personage as "a true lawyer, ever illustrating the obvious, explaining the evident and expatiating the commonplace." No, the law was not for Disraeli.

Just about the time he gives up on the law, he discovers within himself an adventurous urbanophile dandy. The self-realization of the role requires pockets full of walking-around money. Earning that money the old-fashioned way is out of the question. Doing so would contradict the suggestion of mysterious wealth.

Gambling is the traditional solution. Disraeli follows the tradition and gambles on South American mining shares. He loses. He then involves himself in a newspaper venture. It fails. His resumé, as he enters his twenties, shows a spendthrift, hopelessly in debt (he will not be out of debt until he is sixty), trained to

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do nothing other than spend days in Mayfair in search of the perfect cravat.

At this point we see laid bare the strategy that determines his career. He forms friendships and liaisons with older women of wealth and position. In time, he will marry one such woman twelve years older than he and live happily ever after. He obtains pocket money by writing a novel using up the events that immediately precede putting pen to paper.

The characters of that first novel, *Vivian Grey*, are disguised portraits of Disraeli's friends, acquaintances, and the aristocrats he would like to have known. The novel is published anonymously through the help of an influential woman. When Disraeli is unmasked as the author, he is taunted as having betrayed the gentleman's code. But he attracts notoriety, which, for the time being, makes do for the adventurer's all-consuming desire for fame and power.

The accumulation of self-inflicted wounds drives him into retreat, where he sketches in his second novel, *The Young Duke*. He then, on borrowed money, takes the Grand Tour with interesting detours. In the Middle East he learns to smoke the hookah. He collects ecumenical ideas concerning comparative religion that will appear in his novels, speeches, and conversation. He interests himself in fancy walking sticks and colorful vests. He sports both a morning stick and an evening stick. He becomes the serious student of the superficial.

When he returns to London, again La Forza Del Destino. In a way no biographer adequately explains, Disraeli presses open a Sire DeMaletroit's side door into an English society whose assumptions require it to reject this heavily in debt, sarcastic, baptized Jew. He enters as a dandy and a poseur affecting aristocratic aloofness. And, mirabile dictu, he is welcomed in.

Here, a few words concerning English dandyism, because to ignore its importance in any consideration of Disraeli is to subtract an essential element. Weintraub had written all around dandyism before he commenced *Disraeli*. His biographical subjects have included Reggie Turner, the faithful friend of Oscar Wilde, and James McNeill Whistler. Whistler and Disraeli met when Whistler requested Disraeli to sit for a portrait. Disraeli refused.

Despite Mr. Weintraub's expertise on the subject, he does not give as full a treatment of Disraeli's dandyism as one would have liked. Jules Barbey D'Aurevilly declared that the whole concept of the dandy is a twig of the English attraction to eccentricity. Eccentricity standing alone is uninteresting. It simply represents the revolt of the individual against the established order. Eccentricity requires no skill or technique.

> Dandyism on the contrary, while respecting the conventionalities, plays with them. While admitting their power, it suffers from and revenges itself upon them, and pleads them as an excuse against themselves; dominates and is dominated by them in turn. To play this twofold and changing game, requires complete control of all the suppleness which goes to the making of elegance, in the same way as by their union all the shades of the prism go to the making of the opal.

Ellen Moers, in her detailed study of dandyism, gives over a whole chapter to Disraeli. She places him in the line running from Beau Brummel to Alfred D'Orsay, and then to Max Beerbohm, the end of the line. In a letter to Reggie Turner, dated December 20, 1920, Beerbohm gives his views on Dizzy, a dandy in old age:

> Nothing noble or grand about dear old Dizzy! Part of his charm is that one feels no respect for him. Intensely lovable, but entirely unrespectable. One even has the luxury of despising him. An old man ought to cease from playing the fool, surely? But this idea never occurred to D. or rather I have no doubt, it occurred to him often, but was always rejected. It is extraordinary to see how, up to the very last, after all that he had suffered and incredibly achieved, he himself remained a mountebank.

Dizzy, as a youth, apprenticed himself to Count D'Orsay, who studied under Beau Brummel. D'Orsay's and Brummel's careers were brief. Cyril Connolly has observed that the dandy reigns for ten years and decays for forty more. Brummel and D'Orsay expired in France having fled London to avoid creditors' bailiffs. Beerbohm retired early to an inconspicuous villa in Italy. When Dizzy confronted the fact that he was trained for nothing but dandyism, he declared it to be, as a full-time career, too demanding. He turned to lighter duty. Politics. In addition to its usual attractions, politics held out an immediate practical advantage.

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English law gave a member of the House of Commons immunity against imprisonment for debt while the House was in session.

Disraeli lost his first four bids for election to the House of Commons. Each campaign added to his debts. In those days one bought votes. Agents, for a fee, promised to bring in the vote. Disraeli hired such an agent, didn't pay him, and got sued. He now faced the imminent threat of imprisonment for debt. Again, destiny. In 1837 he is elected to the House as a Tory. His maiden speech is a failure. "I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me."

It took the House some time to get used to Dizzy's languid, epigrammatic tone of irony laced with sarcasm. His strength was in repartee and debate rather than in set pieces. He also had the energy, the courage, and the irrational optimism required of a politician.

Disraeli profited by the presence of a handy target, William Gladstone, a pompous hypocrite. Disraeli, in a speech in 1878, submitted this description of the Great Commoner:

A sophisticated rhetorician [Gladstone], inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity, and gifted with an egotistical imagination that can at all times command an interminable and inconsistent series of arguments to malign an opponent and to glorify himself.

In time Dizzy took control of a tired Tory machine and rode it in twice as prime minister. His first administration in 1868 was too brief to give him many opportunities. His second administration, which commenced in 1874 and ended in 1880, was marked by his close relationship with Queen Victoria—he called her the Faery—and a preoccupation with foreign affairs. In domestic affairs he was able to bring about social reforms that gave the Tories the appearance of magnanimous benefactors of the oppressed. He was able to do for the liberals what they were unable to do for themselves.

Disraeli's triumph was the European Congress of Berlin in 1878, convened to avoid a European war that could involve Russia, Turkey, and Germany. By this time Disraeli had become first earl of Beaconsfield, with the obligatory country estate. But he was old and tired, suffering from gout, asthma, and the medical malpractices of his physicians. Despite

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the handicaps, Bismarck picked Disraeli, the "Old Jew," as cleverest of the negotiators. Dizzy returned to London in triumph. "Lord Salisbury and myself have brought you back peace—but a peace I hope with honor." Neville Chamberlain, returning from Munich in 1938, echoed Disraeli's words, but Chamberlain did not have Disraeli's luck.

What would it have been like to be an intimate of Disraeli, talking with him of an afternoon when he was too tired to perform? Mr. Weintraub does not offer us his own ideas on this. Perhaps it would be out of place to do so in a carefully researched biography. If Mr. Weintraub were to indulge such speculations, he would find inspiration in a contemporary description of Henry Labouchère, a bitter political adversary of Disraeli's in the House of Commons. Labby, as Dizzy, was a wit, a poseur, and a writer:

He was the oracle of an initiated circle, and the smoking-room of the House of Commons was his shrine. There, poised in an American rocking-chair and delicately toying with a cigarette, he unlocked the varied treasures of his well-stored memory, and threw over the changing scenes of life the mild light of his genial philosophy. It was a chequered experience that made him what he was. He had known men and cities; had probed in turn the mysteries of the Caucus, the Green-room, and the Stock Exchange; had been a diplomatist, a financier, a journalist, and a politician. Under these circumstances it was not surprising that his faith—no doubt originally robust—in the rectitude of human nature and the purity of human motive should have undergone some process of degeneration. Still, it may be questioned whether, after all that he had seen and done, he really was the absolute and all-round cynic that he seemed to be. The palpable endeavour to make out the worst of everyone—including himself—gave a certain flavour of unreality to his conversation; but, in spite of this drawback, he was an engaging talker. His language was racy and incisive, and he spoke as neatly as he wrote. His voice was pleasant, and his utterance deliberate and effective. He had a keen eye for absurdities and incongruities, a shrewd insight into affectation and bombast, and an admirable impatience of all the moral and intellectual qualities which constitute the Bore. He was by no means inclined to bow the knee too slavishly to an exalted reputation, and he analyzed with agreeable frankness the personal and political qualities of great and good men, even they that sat on the Liberal Front Bench. As an unmasker of political humbug he was supreme, but his dislike of that vice often led him into unreasonable depreciations.

Where are the remains of Disraeli's days to be found today? Disraeli's success at obtaining Suez shares is the plot of a 1929 play and a talking picture now available at the local video store. Once the shares were put up for sale by the Khedive of Egypt, the Suez Canal stock became of intense interest to Russia and France. Russia wanted Britain confined to the long route around to India. France wanted Britain out of the Middle East. Dizzy brought to the table the negotiator's impenetrable mask, secret information, and his friends, the Rothschilds. Dizzy got the stock and England got its passage to India. Mr. George Arliss played Dizzy as a gentle, paternal, cynically wise tactician. In the movie, entitled *Disraeli*, Arliss looks identical to a photograph in Mr. Weintraub's book—the photograph showing Disraeli's mask-like face framed by the dyed black curls of the tired dandy.

During his lifetime, as Mr. Weintraub so carefully details, Disraeli was consistently treated as an adventurer, an outsider, and a foreigner. The gradual transformation that occurred after Dizzy's interment shows that Disraeli's surprises continued in afterlife. Time converted him into the Tory icon who demonstrated how a Conservative government must treat power as an obligation and a responsibility.

Dizzy is also to be found in all the quotation anthologies. The latest edition of Bartlet's *Familiar Quotations* gives Dizzy some two and two-thirds pages. Gladstone, Dizzy's old antagonist, gets less than half a page.

The Disraeli Project, located at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, issues Disraeli's correspondence, edited and annotated, volume after volume. Mr. Weintraub had access to this trove. He also read just about every contemporary diary in which the diarist reacts to or mentions Disraeli. Dizzy, the man of infinite surprises, provides Mr. Weintraub with a few of his own. His biography submits first-time evidence of new love affairs and of several unrecorded children. The availability of this wealth of detail, gossip, and writing could trigger a moderate revival of Disraeli the writer. He originated the political

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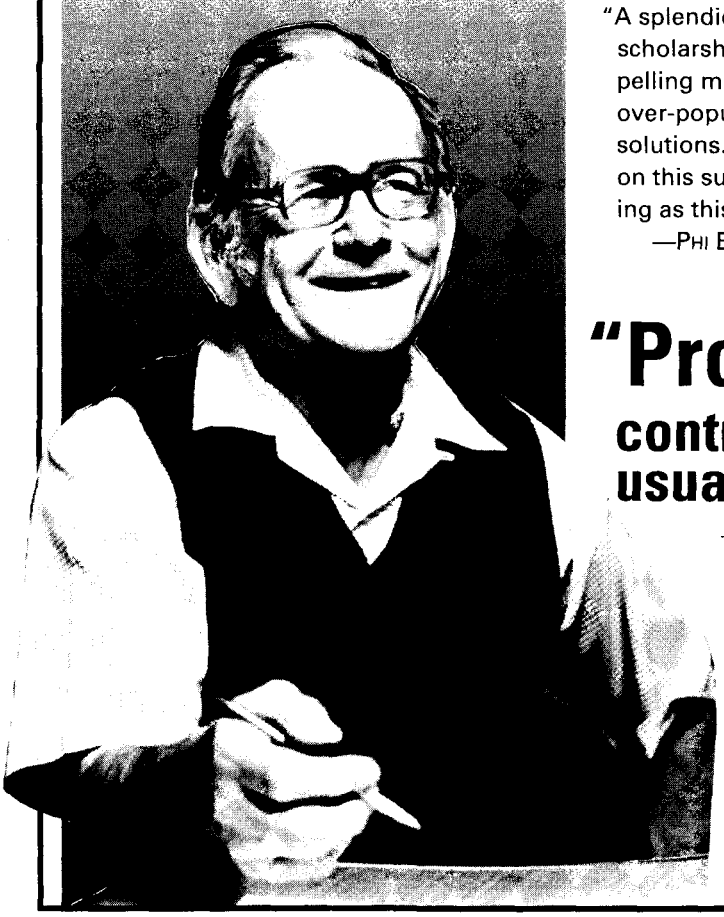

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novel, the novel that gives the inside story of what really happens in politics, the novel that unmasks the powerful so the world can see just who these people are when one puts aside vanity's disguise. From time to time, one or two of these novels jump back in print, done up with a new preface and a new copyright. Is the real Dizzy, the man of mystery, awaiting rediscovery right there in one of his own novels? So he may be, and therefore the biographies will continue.

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Reviewed by WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

The Library of America has already given us many books to be grateful for, but now they have outdone themselves with two volumes of Henry James's travel writings (complete with the Pennell illustrations) and—even more ambitiously, since the editorial task has been monumental—a two-volume anthology of nineteenth-century American poetry, edited by John Hollander. Not only is Hollander an accomplished poet whose knowledge of prosody is unmatched (see his witty and useful guide to English verse, *Rhyme's Reason*), but he knows as much poetry as anyone in England or America—"knows" in the sense that he has the poems going round in his head. Imagine the scope of this undertaking: given roughly two thousand pages of room, the editor is faced with deciding whom to include, how much of X or Y to print, and what proportion of space to allot the major figures. (And who *are* the major nineteenth-century American poets anyway?) By way of embracing a large democratic vista, Hollander gives us one hundred pages of American Indian poetry and another seventy-five of folk songs and spirituals. Each volume contains notes to the poems and extensive biographical sketches of the poets. (Hollander wrote the notes but farmed out the sketches.) We have here a labor of some years.

The undertaking with which Hollander's may be compared is Edmund Clarence Stedman's *An American Anthology*, published in 1900. I bring up Stedman, rather than the Oxford books of American verse edited by F. O. Matthiessen (1950) and Richard Ellmann (1976), since his anthology—except for some poets who wrote at the end of the eighteenth century—is exclusively nineteenth century in its selections. Unlike Hollander, Stedman (also a poet himself and represented in the new anthology by one poem, his "Prelude to *An American Anthology*") prefaced his book with a long critical review of the nation's poets in which he looked forward to "poesy's return to dignity and favor." (He could scarcely have imagined the sort of "return" that such poets as Frost, Stevens, Pound, and Eliot were about to effect.) Stedman printed the work of nearly 500 poets; Hollander prints 142 poets along with the anonymous spirituals and Indian poetry. Stedman printed more poems—about 2,000, and the double-columned pages of his Cambridge edition are cluttered, unlike Library of America's readable pages—but Hollander makes more distinctions among his poets. Generous space is allotted to those he sees as most significant: Whitman (more than 200 pages); Dickinson, Emerson, Melville, and Longfellow (between 80 and 95 each); smaller but still substantial allotments to Whittier, Bryant, and Poe. You can tell who weighs more than whom.

I presume that, among readers over the age of fifty at least, I am not alone in enjoying an ambiguous and unsatisfactory relation to our classic poetry heritage. In English classes from elementary through grammar school we were presented with—often asked to memorize—examples of that heritage, from Bryant's "Thanatopsis" and "To a Waterfowl" through Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie," Holmes's "The Chambered Nautilus," Lowell's prelude to "The Vision of Sir Launfal," and Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith" (I chose to memorize "The Skeleton in Armor" instead). These Fireside Poets are now largely condescended to

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and wholly avoided by professors of American literature on the grounds of their alleged tameness and privileged status as establishment white males (the two conditions are presumed to go together). We also read—in Johnson City, New York, that is—Poe's "The Bells," and "The Raven," Edwin Markham's "The Man with the Hoe," and sugary bits from James Whitcomb Riley ("Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay") and Eugene Field ("The gingham dog and the calico cat"). No Melville and, except perhaps for "Concord Hymn," no Emerson; Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" only, and a poem or two of Dickinson's in the old smoothed-out versions of her texts. To me, and probably to most of my teachers, these American poems were equated with *poetry*; we read few or no English authors until high school when Scott, Shakespeare, and George Eliot made obligatory appearances, though not as poets. So when, in college and graduate school, I was introduced to a whole different order of figures, from Donne to Keats to Yeats, it was easy to forget about the Firesiders and equate our nineteenth-century poetry with Dickinson and Whitman—two "impossible" artists making their impact out of verse procedures contrary to the going ones.

Now that the impulses of feminism and of gay studies have further secured the place of Dickinson and Whitman as virtually the only classic American poets who make it into the classroom, what does a leisurely trip through Hollander's immense museum yield to an interested reader, rather than a professional taxonomist or spotter of trends? First, and maybe last, that there is in these two thousand pages an intolerable deal of what Frost called "poetical" verse—which may best be pronounced *poy-tree. Poy-tree* is what you know you're in for when Richard Watson Gilder, one of the countless three-pronged names that mark our literary heritage, begins a sonnet with the question "What is a sonnet?" You can already predict the poetical answer: " 'T is the pearly shell / That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea; / A precious jewel carved most curiously." Quite so, alas, and alas as well that Gilder has added one more to the much-too-large pile of sonnets that almost convince us it's an impossible form in which to say anything seriously.

An overplus of uplift, then, and a prevailing eagerness to point a moral and adorn the tale

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("Then, in most poetic wise, / I began to moralize," writes Joseph Rodman Drake in "The Mocking Bird") go hand in glove with humorlessness. Thus we're all the more delighted to discover that Americans even back then could be wittily sophisticated in verse. New to me, and extremely satisfying in this vein, was "The Wants of Man" by our sixth president, John Quincy Adams (his grandson Henry's "Buddha and Brahma" does not fare so well). Whittier's "The Haschisch" sparkles as does his excellent "Maud Muller" (so does Bret Harte's sequel to the latter, "Mrs. Judge Jenkins"), Holmes's "The Deacon's Masterpiece" ("The Wonderful 'One-Hoss Shay' ") in its swing and idiom retains some of the pleasure it gave me when I read it in ninth grade. Phoebe Cary, whom I'd never read, is represented by some amusing parodies of predecessors like Poe ("Samuel Brown" displacing "Annabel Lee") and Tennyson, whose "Locksley Hall" becomes "Granny's House," about the sad plight of a young woman from the city:

> Where one winter fell my father,
> slipping off a keg of lard,
> I was left a trampled orphan,
> and my case was pretty hard,
> Or to burst all links of habit,
> and to wander far and fleet,
> Or from farm-house unto farm-house
> till I found my Uncle Pete.

If my excessive appreciation of such humorous poems and moments was the result of an overdose of *poy-tree* when young, something similar happened in the encounter with half-forgotten gems like "Woodman, spare that tree!" or "Over the river, and through the wood, / To grandfather's house we go," or "I never saw a purple cow," or "A capital ship for an ocean trip," or "Curfew shall not ring tonight" (I identify these mainly by famous lines rather than their proper titles). Not to mention "We three kings of Orient are," the final two words always heard in my youth as "Orientar."

But what to say about the poets who, in Hollander's judgment, weigh most? In order of chronology they are Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Poe, Whitman, Melville, and Dickinson—how large would they bulk in some putative anthology of world poets, or even in one that also includes their nineteenth-century English cousins? My possibly severe or misguided judgment is that they would not bulk large. To indulge in some sweeping pronouncements: Bryant, Whittier, and Longfellow are distinguished men of letters (the biographical sketch of Bryant is particularly amazing for the scope of his attainments) and attractive minor poets. Bryant gives us admirable, sometimes beautiful blank verse, unexceptionable sentiments, and no interesting ideas; the first half of Whittier's "Snow-Bound" is a regionalist gem, and several of his poems are nice examples of a species Kingsley Amis calls the "Reciter," to be declaimed aloud. Longfellow, though his longer works are probably dead, wrote exquisite lyrics such as "The Fire of Drift-wood," "Snow-Flakes," "Aftermath" (all included here) and "Hawthorne," "The Village Churchyard in Cambridge," and "My Books" (which might have been included). Emerson in "Concord Hymn," "Two Rivers," "Uriel," "The Rhodora," and "The Snow-Storm" is beyond praise. But most of his poetry is windy, incoherent (or "profound") and prosodically ungraceful. Melville—strangest of all American writers, I am convinced—has stirring lines and a very few poems that hang together convincingly. Poe is a sport.

That leaves Whitman and Dickinson, whose power to move us is commensurate with their power to offend, or at least annoy. Whitman does this through, yes, his barbaric yawp that never stops yawping. The wonderful case Randall Jarrell made for him in a famous essay is achieved, of course, by quoting marvelous bits like "I am the man, I suffered, I was there" (Jarrell's essay is titled "Some Lines from Whitman") and abusing readers who overlook those bits. But surely, most of the time, Whitman should be resisted, even mocked, by an active reader who won't be easily taken over. Reading him in bulk makes one feel again how many marvelous stretches of musical verse there are and how they're almost always stretches rather than full poems. And Dickinson? Isn't it time at least to suggest the possibility that her quatrains involve enormous built-in limitations; that often the ubiquitous dashes get in the way as much as they enhance the voice's power; that, as Philip Larkin remarked, too many of the poems issue in "a teased-out and breathless obscurity"? This is but a surly way of saying that, rather than assuming (as it is assumed these days) the great-

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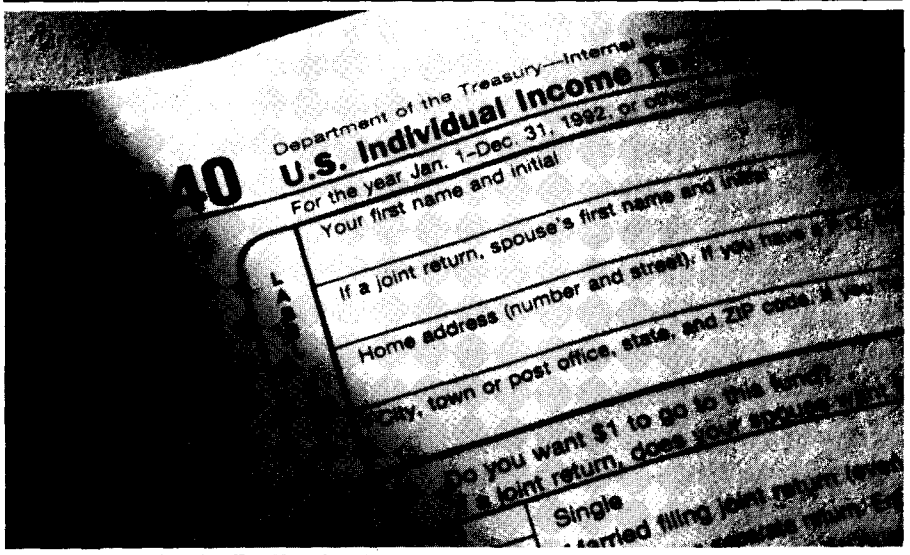

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ness of Whitman and Dickinson, we must, as individual readers, actively distinguish the particular poems and sequences in which we can win through to a sense of that greatness.

Finally, a few prizes should be handed out. Best undervalued poem: "Gloucester Moors" by William Vaughn Moody ("Who has given to me this sweet, / And given my brother dust to eat? / And when will his wage come in?"). Novelist whom we didn't know was such a promising poet: William Dean Howells. Worst single poem: "Avalon" by Thomas Holley Chivers ("The worms are feeding on thy lily-lips, / My milk-white Dove!"). Most attractive minor-minor American poet: Edward Rowland Sill (1841–1887). Two most distinctive poems left out of this anthology: one, for its bathos, Eugene Field's "Little Boy Blue" ("The little toy dog is covered with dust"); two, for its sublimity, this by Emily Dickinson:

> A death blow is a life blow to some
> Who till they died did not alive become;
> Who had they lived, had died,
> But when they died, Vitality begun.

Medal for outstanding service to the republic of letters for producing these volumes: John Hollander.

Give Him Liberty

ARE THERE TOO MANY LAWYERS? AND OTHER VEXATIOUS QUESTIONS. *By Joseph Fulda. Foundation for Economic Education. $14.95.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL LEVIN

The disintegration of communism has had two major consequences for the United States. It has made domestic issues more important than they have been for many decades, and it has served as a reminder that free markets are far more efficient producers of well-being than are command economies. Both developments invite renewed reflection on liberty, and this short, pithy, extremely readable and quotable book by a libertarian is most helpful for that rethinking.

The defining value for libertarians is freedom from coercion. For the libertarian, all aggression against non-aggressors is wrong. There is a right to speak without being interfered with. But there is no right to positive goods like food or shelter, since a positive right implies that someone, usually the taxpayer, has a duty to provide it, and whoever enforces that duty initiates aggression. If you refuse to pay taxes to support welfare, you are put in jail. Libertarians thus view the purpose of government very narrowly, as basically that of a cop-cum-judiciary-cum-penal-system whose job it is to prevent and punish assault, threats, and fraud (which also involves bypassing the will of the deceived). Some libertarians go all the way to anarchism, questioning the right of a policeman to interfere uninvited with *my* shooting of *you*, but mercifully Fulda does not follow them.

Libertarianism strikes most people as both too much and too little. It seems too much because utopian: is the libertarian seriously suggesting the end of public education and the privatization of streets? At the same time libertarianism seems too limited. Liberals worry that complete freedom will be abused, with people dropping like flies as untested and unlabeled medicines are allowed on the market. Conservatives such as Irving Kristol and George Will argue that freedom, to be worthwhile, must be put to some good use, or at least not be put to bad and socially destructive ones. A great virtue of Fulda's book is his willingness to take on these issues directly.

His answer to the charge of utopianism is implicit in his treatment of prayer in public schools in the essay "Why Are There So Many Social Issues?" Proponents of prayer have a good case, he points out: "that the Founders of the Republic never meant to exclude God from the classroom, that prayer has never harmed a soul, and that it remains voluntary." But opponents also have a case: "students who are 'different' and don't pray with the group will be singled out for unpopularity, . . . that a child under such peer pressure has no volition to speak of, [and] that parents, not schools, should minister to the religious needs and beliefs of children." The result is a parade of court cases and decisions that leave no one happy.

Fulda's conclusion: "The key to the controversy is not 'prayer' but 'public.' It is the un-

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derlying government intervention of compulsory schooling and tax-financed, government schools which force the competing claims to a head. Were the schools to be all private, there would be no problem, as each parent selected the school which best meets the interests of his or her child as the parent defines it." No one would be required to "surrender a piece of his freedom." As Fulda also states in the quasi-legal mode of which he is fond, "I do not favor public schools, and therefore do not reach [the] question [of prayer]." He cites other irresolvable conflicts brought on by an initial government intervention, such as the precise solicitation rights of beggars in public places. A timely issue not mentioned by Fulda is academic freedom in public universities. The problem would not arise if the government did not undertake higher education.

As for the dire consequences of government withdrawal from the market, Fulda points to mechanisms by which the market can take up the slack of deregulation. Why should the consumer trust any label if there is no Food and Drug Administration standing over the manufacturer? What about untested, unlabeled, but beguilingly cheap medicines? One possibility Fulda suggests is that manufacturers will want insurance against lawsuits, and insurance companies will insist on testing the products they are asked to insure. Test results can be displayed on products as a form of advertising. Should someone wish to take a chance on cheap, uninsured mystery medicine rather than pay more for a thoroughly tested one, Fulda argues, that is his decision, which others have no right to prevent him from making. This basic idea, the adequacy of market mechanisms for jobs it might appear that only the government can do, is a commonplace of the libertarian literature, but Fulda handles it with imagination and originality. He shows particular psychological insight into the fear of the "spiteful rich man" who will buy up vital resources and hold society hostage unless the government stops him.

Fulda is aware of the appeal of George Will's "Tory Position" and sincerely admires Will's skill as a social critic. But he rejects the use of the government as (in Will's words) "an instrument of conservative values," or any values. He cites Will to the effect that conservatism is about balancing competing values, and he replies: "Well, *life* is about balancing competing

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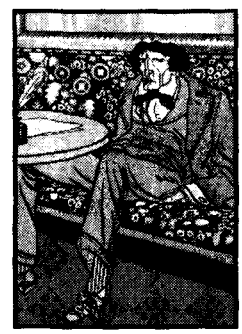

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values, but the liberal [that is, libertarian] does not want such decisions made in the political realm." Will's mistake in wanting morality imposed, says Fulda, is that of confusing the doctrine that morality ought not be imposed—which may be based on "an abhorrence of coercion or doubts about the universalizability of values"—with the nihilistic doctrine that there is no morality. Fulda is certainly right here. It is as if Will thought the only reason not to seize the bow from the concertmaster is that there is no such thing as missing a note. And historically, Fulda argues, capitalism does not produce values that eventually destroy it; "freedom and tradition reinforce each other. . . . The first century of America's nationhood, after all, saw both piety and morality, on the one hand, and freedom and the private property order, on the other."

If *Lawyers* has a soft spot, it is Fulda's grounding of liberty in the idea of property. In one sense Fulda is right to emphasize that the sheer freedom to move unimpeded, without the right to own a car, a bus ticket, or shoes, is empty. But in another sense the question he is addressing, "How do rights in land and things preserve liberty?" answers itself. A property right in a thing is the freedom to use it without interference—property presupposes the notion of liberty, so it cannot be its basis. A more promising approach is one he rejects. He believes the government must not push some people around to enhance the freedom of others because there is "no coherent notion of freedom which includes the freedom to coerce," and he regards as logically "redundant" the requirement that all basic liberties be universal. But that is incorrect. The absolute monarch really is free to push his subjects around. For that matter, Robin Hood governments that transfer resources from the rich to the poor really do increase the "positive" freedom of the previously poor. The objection to the tyrant's freedom and to all coercion in the name of equality is the golden rule: basic rights must be such as can be enjoyed by everyone. Only one lucky man can have the right to order everyone else around, and there obviously cannot be a situation in which everyone is being supported by the labor of others.

This is a minor failing in an author who deserves to be widely read. The United States appears at least in the short run to be heading into a period of decreased individual liberty, with the government—other people—assuming an ever-larger role in telling each individual where he can live, who he can work with, and how he can spend his money. At the same time, the quality of life of the ordinary person continues to deteriorate. It is worth mulling over the connection between these two phenomena.

What's in It for the Talent

THE COST OF TALENT: HOW EXECUTIVES AND PROFESSIONALS ARE PAID AND HOW IT AFFECTS AMERICA. *By Derek Bok. Free Press. $24.95.*

Reviewed by PETER BAIDA

"Are certain executives and professionals significantly overpaid? Is the supply of intellectually gifted university graduates distributed . . . in a manner that matches the nation's needs? Do current methods of compensation motivate professionals to work suitably hard for appropriate goals?" These are the questions that Derek Bok addresses in *The Cost of Talent*, a thoughtful, fact-filled book that should interest anyone who has ever winced when paying a doctor's or lawyer's bill, or wondered whether an executive such as the late Steve Ross of Time-Warner would have found himself insufficiently motivated if his board had asked him to accept single-year compensation of, say, $7.8 million instead of the $78 million he actually received in 1990.

Bok, the retired president of Harvard University and former dean of the Harvard Law School, pays special attention to trends in the earnings of six important groups: doctors, lawyers, corporate executives, university professors, teachers, and upper-level federal civil servants. These six groups correspond to six of the powerful graduate and professional schools that Bok oversaw at Harvard. When Bok asks whether "existing differences in pay help to allocate talent among the various occupations in a manner that corresponds to society's needs and priorities," what he is asking, in a sense, is whether differences in compensation

✪ PETER BAIDA is the author of *Poor Richard's Legacy: American Business Values from Benjamin Franklin to Donald Trump.*

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have guided too many intellectually gifted graduates into gilded careers that prevent them from serving the nation as well as they might.

Many readers, especially readers with some background in economics, will think that Bok is wasting his time by arguing a case that Adam Smith settled forever in 1776. Free markets allocate resources efficiently; the compensation for executives and professionals is set by a free market; hence, that compensation is not only fair, but it also steers people into careers that produce the best possible result for society as a whole. Case closed.

This argument reigns supreme in the textbook realm of perfect competition. Bok understands the power of Smith's analysis, offers an admirable summary of Smith's views, and adds a discussion of the relevance to compensation of the theory of marginal productivity that such neoclassical economists as Knut Wicksell in Sweden, Leon Walrus in France, John Bates Clark in the United States, and Alfred Marshall in England developed more than a century after the publication of *The Wealth of Nations*. It is when he compares the actual working of market forces to the textbook models that Bok finds himself forced to join the skeptics who question whether executive and professional compensation in the United States is regulated by anything that remotely resembles a perfect competitive market.

Take the case of corporate executives. In large corporations, the chief executive officer (CEO) generally serves as chairman of the board and strongly influences the selection of new board members, the fees paid to board members, and the selection of the consultant who presents the board with recommendations on the CEO's next pay increase. "This procedure," Bok comments, "differs so much from any market for services that Adam Smith ever imagined that it cannot conceivably sanctify the amounts currently earned by corporate leaders."

What about the notion that an artfully designed compensation package can align the interests of the chief executive with those of the stockholders who pay his salary? One popular way of achieving this alignment is through stock-option plans that supposedly link CEO pay to corporate performance. The trouble, Bok observes, citing a study of the incentive plans of the two hundred largest industrial companies in the United States from 1955 to 1983, is that these plans are adjusted frequently, usually to increase the rewards or to make them easier to win. "In particular, when share prices declined, so that executives could not cash in on their stock options, the 'strike price' was often reduced, allegedly to make sure that the option stayed sufficiently within reach to encourage the CEO to keep trying." Bok quotes the corporate pay consultant Graef S. Crystal's description of the remarkable game that results: "If you go to a track meet and watch the high jump, you'll notice that each time a contestant clears the bar, it is raised to a higher level. And if a contestant knocks the bar over, he or she is eliminated from the competition. . . . [But in the world of executive compensation,] if you knock the bar over, the bar is simply lowered. . . . Indeed, should it be necessary, a trench will be dug and the bar buried."

Another case of market failure, Bok charges, is physician compensation. Bok cites a 1992 General Accounting Office report that found that at least 40 percent of patient-care doctors in Florida routinely referred patients to entities in which they had a financial stake. Another 1992 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that Florida physicians who owned an interest in radiation therapy units sent patients to them 50 percent more often than the average for all American patients and charged 40 percent more than the average rates elsewhere in the nation. Still another 1992 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that the average markups for physical therapy and comprehensive rehabilitation were two-to-three times greater when the services were performed in facilities in which the physicians held an interest. These are not the arms-length transactions that Adam Smith had in mind when he proclaimed the virtues of the invisible hand.

In the current environment, Bok argues, "what doctors charge bears little relation to what they would receive in a truly competitive market." For example, surgeons today can perform a coronary bypass operation in roughly half the time required twenty years ago and at less risk to the patient. In a competitive market, prices are supposed to go down as providers find more efficient ways to deliver goods

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and services, yet these fees have not fallen. "As a result, by the mid-1980s, surgeons were able to make over $500,000 per year simply by performing three bypass operations (or twelve hours of work) each week." Bok does not object to increased efficiency. "The problem . . . is that the inflexible price system in the health care field allows doctors to continue pocketing the savings instead of being forced by competition to pass them on to the customer."

Bok is especially concerned about the way that differences in compensation may influence the distribution of talent in society. Some of the most interesting passages in *The Cost of Talent* concern changes in the career choices made by America's best students. "From 1966 to 1976," Bok reports, "the proportion of top students from elite private colleges choosing legal careers rose from 13.7 percent to 21.6 percent." Business also attracted an increasing share of gifted students: one study of leading private liberal arts colleges showed that the proportion of top A students bound for business careers rose from 2.8 percent in 1966 to 6.1 percent in 1976, and a similar survey at another group of elite colleges showed further growth from 7.2 percent in 1982 to 14 percent in 1989.

The medical profession, on the other hand, has failed to attract an increasing share of exceptionally talented students, perhaps because more and more physicians dislike the brutal hours and the endless wrangling with insurance companies. "Among Phi Beta Kappas," Bok reports, "the fraction entering medicine declined steadily, moving from 23 percent in the early 1970s to 18 percent in the early 1980s. The share of top students from elite private colleges also dropped somewhat. . . . By 1990, therefore, medicine still attracted academically able students, but the gap between them and their counterparts entering law and business had narrowed appreciably."

Non-university teaching has fared far worse. "By every known measure of intellectual ability," Bok writes, "teachers were already below the average for all undergraduates even before the 1970s began." By 1975, Graduate Record Examination scores for education majors were twenty-five points below the national average in the verbal test and fifty-one points below in the quantitative one. By 1980, "among top students from elite liberal arts colleges, the fraction planning to become teachers dropped below two percent." (Elsewhere, in a passage not likely to endear him to the president of the American Federation of Teachers, Albert Shanker, Bok comments that "teaching is one of the few professions in which members with the least intellectual ability are paid just as much and promoted just as fast as their most gifted colleagues.")

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Having concluded that "no effective competitive market regulates professional compensation in this country," Bok considers possible remedies. To reduce excessive earnings, he advocates raising tax rates on the affluent. To overcome the disadvantages of the public sector in competing for talented personnel, he advocates increasing public-sector salaries. To counter the deficiencies of merit-pay systems in business, he advocates shifting from individual to group incentives. Conceding that all of these measures have limitations that would make them "only partially effective," Bok concludes, rather drearily but perhaps inevitably, with a call for "rethinking our values." What else would anyone expect from a university president?

Unlike many journalists who might have tackled the potentially sexy subject of bloated

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incomes, Bok does not scream or sensationalize, seeking to win his day on the television talk-show circuit. He neither shoots off his mouth nor shoots from the hip. These refusals make his book more honorable and less explosive than it might have been. Bok is too measured to be a muckraker. *The Cost of Talent* seriously explores a subject that is usually treated, in television, newspaper, and magazine reports, with the intent of provoking a cheap monetary titillation.

Dangerous Beauty

BENJAMIN BRITTEN: A BIOGRAPHY. *By Humphrey Carpenter. Scribner's. $30.*

Reviewed by TERRY TEACHOUT

More and more critics seem to be losing patience with the kind of biography that Joyce Carol Oates has called "pathography." Not that this mounting distaste has stopped writers from continuing to churn out jumbo chronicles of the squalid misadventures of the great (or has persuaded readers not to buy them). Still, it is increasingly common for pathographers to receive testy reviews suggesting that their dirt-dishing satisfies only prurient interests and sheds no useful light on its subjects.

While there is much to be said for this point of view, one wonders exactly how far the opponents of pathography would have its practitioners not go. Presumably it is a matter of degree—and motive. As a rule, the good biographer not only admires his subject but also believes in the existence of great men. It is this belief that, paradoxically, justifies the candor: if a man is truly great, no revelation, however obnoxious, will diminish him in the eyes of history. (The pathographer, by contrast, seeks to discredit the very idea of greatness.) It is perfectly clear, for instance, that Humphrey Carpenter believes the English composer Benjamin Britten, the subject of his latest book, to have been a great man; it is no less clear that Carpenter, having dug up unsavory facts about Britten's life, sees it as his duty to share them with posterity. Whether or not you think Carpenter has struck a proper balance between admiration and candor will probably depend on how good a composer you think Britten was.

That Britten deserves a full-scale biography should be obvious even to those who dislike his music. He won widespread popularity during his lifetime, and it has continued to increase since his death in 1976. Indeed, Britten's music is currently undergoing a critical revaluation that may eventually lead to his being placed in the first rank of modern composers. At the very least, he is without question the most important figure in postwar English music, if only because he single-handedly revived the possibility of modern English opera with works like *Peter Grimes* (1945), *Billy Budd* (1951), and *The Turn of the Screw* (1954).

Moreover, Britten led an interesting life, one that was eventful in precisely the sorts of ways, public and private alike, that make for engrossing reading. He was a homosexual and a pacifist, and suffered genuine (if surprisingly limited) persecution on both counts; he forged for himself a key institutional role in English musical life by starting the Aldeburgh Festival, devoted in large part to performances of his own music; he was close to many distinguished artists of his day, including both composers (Aaron Copland, Dmitri Shostakovich) and writers (W. H. Auden, E. M. Forster).

Humphrey Carpenter's book is far stronger on Britten's life than on his music. Though an enthusiastic amateur musician, Carpenter is by profession a man of letters—his previous books include a good biography of Auden and a bad one of Evelyn Waugh and his circle—and his lack of professional musical training is unmasked whenever he tries to analyze Britten's music at all closely. "I . . . cannot make out," Britten said in 1938, "why it is that they have to hunt for programs & 'meanings' and all that rot!" It is easy to imagine what he would have thought of Carpenter's musical "analyses," which are simpleminded and reductive to the point of worthlessness.

Significantly, Carpenter has almost nothing to say about Britten's instrumental music. It is only when words come into play that his interest is engaged. Sometimes this results in a valuable insight: Carpenter, for example, is the only commentator to have noticed that the 1940 song cycle *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*, dedicated to the great English tenor Peter

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✪ TERRY TEACHOUT is arts columnist of the *New York Daily News.* He is writing *H. L. Mencken: A Life* and editing *A Second Mencken Chrestomathy.*

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Pears, Britten's companion, "does not celebrate a matrimonial bond. It portrays a restless and largely unsatisfied desire." More often, though, he is naggingly literal whenever he attempts to relate Britten's work to his life, a sure sign of musical incapacity:

Among the instruments called for [in the opera *Billy Budd*] is an alto saxophone, and to its half-mournful, oily sounds the flogged Novice is led on stage, unable to walk after his punishment. When a friend consoles him with the words "The pain'll soon pass," he replies: "The shame'll never pass, the shame'll never pass, the shame'll never, never, never pass." No great shame was attached to corporal punishment in English preparatory and public schools. . . . On the other hand if, as he had told Crozier [Eric Crozier, co-librettist of *Budd*], Britten was sexually abused at South Lodge [his prep school], possibly while undergoing a flogging, he would surely have responded in just this fashion: the shame would never pass. At the same time the ambiguous saxophone seems to suggest that the experience held a horrified fascination for him.

Fortunately, Carpenter's extensive research, the fruits of which are visible on every page of this biography (he was given unrestricted access to Britten's papers and interviewed seventy-seven of the composer's surviving friends, relatives, and associates), has made it possible for him to transcend his musical limitations and produce a book of real value. In *Benjamin Britten: A Biography*, Carpenter draws a tough-minded, entirely convincing portrait of an endlessly touchy man driven by deep-seated insecurities that sometimes led him to treat his closest colleagues brutally, yet charismatic enough that he never lacked for colleagues to mistreat. Carpenter is especially good on the Aldeburgh Festival, which one friend of Britten's described as being "like a girl's school, or a court—crushes, favorites, who's in, who's out." Better books will undoubtedly be written about Benjamin Britten, but this one is the first to provide a detailed account of his life based on primary sources, and to do so without mincing words.

This is where the dirt comes in. That Benjamin Britten was homosexual will hardly be thought shocking (or even surprising) by anyone seriously interested in his life and work. But most Britten specialists have long suspected the existence of a far more equivocal element in his sexual makeup. It can be seen in the recurring themes of the libretti and song texts Britten chose to set, as well as the ways in which he set them. It is impossible, for instance, for an alert observer to watch a performance of *The Turn of the Screw* without feeling a sense of unease rooted in the fact that the composer has presented Miles, a small child, as sexually alluring, perhaps even sexually knowing; that *The Turn of the Screw* is Britten's operatic masterpiece merely serves to heighten its disquieting effect.

In the course of his research, Carpenter learned that Britten frequently engaged in quasi-parental relationships with young boys (often ones involved in performances of his music); and when they became pubescent, he occasionally tried to seduce them. Carpenter failed to locate anyone who would confess to actually having had sexual relations with Britten when young, but one assumes, journalism and contemporary mores being what they are, that it is only a matter of time before somebody comes forward on the English equivalent of "Donahue" to disclose that he slept with Benjamin Britten.

To summarize this part of Carpenter's book

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so baldly is to leave out various mitigating circumstances. For one thing, Britten seems to have been horribly ashamed of his pederastic impulses, and it would appear that actual attempts at seduction were rare (and that some of the boys in question, as is so often the case in situations of this kind, were less than innocent). Indeed, Britten led what many of his homosexual friends, Auden in particular, viewed as a bourgeois, even puritanical lifestyle, living in comparatively unruffled monogamy with Peter Pears for much of his adult life.

Most of the time, Britten restricted his love for boys to an appropriately fatherly affection—as well as channeling it into countless musical works (including *A Ceremony of Carols*, *Noye's Fludde*, the *War Requiem* and *Spring Symphony*, and many of the operas) in which boy singers play central roles. In these works, Britten returned obsessively to the theme of childish innocence defiled by the evil adult world; in his last large-scale composition, an operatic version of Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* (1973), he contended that the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of man's nature must be held in rigid balance if he is to function creatively. These are not the beliefs of a moral monster.

Even so, Britten's admirers are bound to find Carpenter's revelations disturbing. Any number of composers did loathsome things at one time or another. There were precious few loathsome things that Richard Wagner *didn't* do. But molesting children—to give the deed its proper name—was not one of them. However deep our belief in the autonomy of art, there are certain offenses that inevitably color our attitudes towards the artists who commit them. Many such "offenses" have been blown far out of proportion in our present age of political correctness, but others are harder to dismiss. Some thoughtful people regard anti-Semitism as an unforgivable sin in an artist, even one who did nothing to hurt Jews other than disliking them as a group. How, then, should we judge Benjamin Britten, who not only found boys sexually attractive but sometimes sought to lure them into his bed? Should we reject his music because of that ugly fact?

Needless to say, this question would be of purely academic interest had Britten not been a major composer, to my mind among the century's best. It was his good fortune to have grown up in the musically conservative environment of England in the 1920s and 1930s, where his technical virtuosity and consummate professionalism were initially seen as progressive, at least by comparison with the "amateurish and folksy" English composers (Britten's words) of the previous generation. As a result, he felt no pressure to dabble in serialism or other experimental musical techniques, and he developed a mature style notable for its lucid textures, simple yet wonderfully fresh harmonies, and direct emotional appeal. Like Berlioz, Britten was a high romantic who expressed his passions with the poise and reserve of a born classicist, an approach as striking as it is uncommon.

After World War II, avant-garde musical ideologues in Europe and America gradually asserted near-totalitarian control over large parts of the Western musical establishment. Yet Britten never swerved from the path of beauty, even during the years when he was dismissed by critics and composers—though never by performers or audiences—as out of date. He was one of the relatively few composers active in the second half of the twentieth century who believed in the obligation of the serious artist to produce work accessible to a large public: "I believe in the artist serving society. It is better to be a bad composer writing for society than to be a bad composer writing against it. At least your work can be of *some* use."

With the collapse of serialism (which took place, ironically, at the same time as the collapse of Communism), Britten's music has become fashionable once more, and I think it more than likely that history will honor him as one of the courageous figures who kept faith in tonality throughout a dark age of hermetic experimentalism, in something of the same way that Soviet dissidents such as Solzhenitsyn, having fearlessly repudiated the moral assumptions of the society in which they lived, are now honored for having made possible the restoration of Russian liberty.

One of the weaknesses of *Benjamin Britten: A Biography* is that its author offers little perspective on the crosscurrents of contemporary musical history in which Britten played so interesting a part. But this narrowness is the vice of a virtue, since it is by sticking so closely to

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the facts of Britten's life that Humphrey Carpenter has succeeded in writing a book that anyone interested in his music will feel obliged to read. In the process, though, Carpenter has also produced a book that is likely to leave many of its readers feeling acutely uncomfortable, perhaps even to the point of wishing that it had never been written. To understand all is not necessarily to forgive all. The extent to which the notion of "forgiveness" is relevant to the music of a great composer is, of course, another matter altogether, one unlikely to be settled even by the most talented of biographers.

Call for Papers

The AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE announces a call for papers for its 1995 Annual Meeting, which will be held May 11–14, 1995, on the University of Pittsburgh campus. The paper must represent original work on any subject in the history of medicine not previously published or in press. Presentations are limited to twenty minutes. The Association encourages speakers to make their manuscripts available for possible publication in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine.*

Any person interested in presenting a paper at this meeting is invited to submit an abstract (one original and six copies) to Dr. Mary Lindemann, History Department, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Abstracts must be received by October 15, 1994 (no faxes, please). For registration information, write to Dr. Jonathon Erlen, 123 Northview Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15209.

Head Trades

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF SIGMUND FREUD AND SÁNDOR FERENCZI. Volume 1, 1908–1914. *Edited by Eva Brabant, Ernst Falzeder, and Patricia Giampieri-Deutsch. Translated by Peter T. Hoffer, with an introduction by Andre Haynal. Harvard University Press. $39.95.*

Reviewed by PAUL ROAZEN

We now have the twelfth book of Freud's letters to appear in English. After this first volume of the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence, it will take two more full texts to complete the fascinating storehouse of letters that helps flesh out the story of the relationship between the creator of psychoanalysis and his chief Hungarian disciple. Since there may be as many as thirty-five thousand Freud letters that have survived, only a small fraction of which have yet appeared, it will be at least another generation before all of Freud's correspondence gets published. It is likely that these letters are going to show sides of Freud that his most politic defenders would want to minimize. In the end Freud's letter writing is going to overshadow in size the twenty-four-volume Standard Edition of the complete psychological works of Freud that was edited by James Strachey.

The Freud-Ferenczi letters are exceptionally interesting, at least as important as the earlier edition of Freud's letters to his Berlin friend Wilhelm Fliess, which first started coming out in censored form in 1954, or the Freud-Jung correspondence, the initial volume of Freud's letters to appear uncut, which was published in 1974. When Volume 1 of the Freud-Ferenczi letters appeared in 1992 in France, it caused a literary sensation. Some seven thousand copies were sold in a couple of weeks, and the literary dailies there were full of interest in Freud and Ferenczi. The French have only belatedly come to recognize Freud's stature, especially since the late 1960s; still the reception of the first installment of the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence was a cultural event in Paris.

It is generally well known to professionals that, around the time of Ferenczi's death in 1933, his relationship to Freud was highly strained. In 1957 Ernest Jones, Freud's official biographer, alleged that at the end of Ferenczi's life he had been mentally ill and that this sickness accounted for the difficulties with Freud. (The 1993 Freud-Jones letters seemed disappointingly businesslike, concerned primarily with promoting the politics of the psychoanalytic movement.) Over the years a con-

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sensus has grown up that Jones had been malicious, however much he may have relied on Freud's opinion in an irritated mood at the time of Ferenczi's death.

It is now generally agreed that Ferenczi had been a pioneer in adjusting the "classical" use of the psychoanalytic couch in order to encompass types of patients who were less likely to thrive under Freud's recommended way of handling people. Ferenczi's posthumously published 1988 *Clinical Diary*, originally written in 1932, had some stinging criticisms of Freud. By today Ferenczi has come to symbolize all the therapeutic alterations with which loyal followers of Freud tried to experiment. Unlike Carl G. Jung, who cleanly broke with Freud (or was expelled) to set up his own independent school, Ferenczi remained securely within the mainstream of psychoanalytic practitioners who were faithful to Freud's "cause." So it is impossible to read Ferenczi out of the tale of the development of Freud's school. Ferenczi knew that the analyst necessarily remains, especially if aloof, an active participant in the clinical encounter.

Andre Haynal, a Hungarian psychiatrist who practices in Geneva, has been overseeing the whole Freud-Ferenczi correspondence with the assistance of a team of editorial allies. In his introduction to this volume, Haynal has written an interesting and informative account of the steps by which this immense body of letters is finally being published. In the mid-1960s, when I was fortunate to meet the surviving early analysts, I brought to Dr. Michael Balint, then Ferenczi's literary executor, a publishing offer from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press. Haynal finds it surprising that Balint should have "suddenly" written to one of the key players in the drama, Ferenczi's step-daughter Elma. In fact, I was actively interviewing all these people at the time, and, if only from me, Elma and Balint had to understand that eventually the full account of the emotional involvement between Ferenczi and Elma would get told. Relying on documents I had seen among Jones's papers, and which I asked Balint and later Elma about, I could not fathom exactly what had been going on between Ferenczi and Elma, although in the 1950s Balint had demanded that Jones never allude to it. Anna Freud, the master's youngest daughter, who was in charge of his side of the letters, had her own long-standing objections to releasing the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence, and it seems that she thought in terms of their eventual "partial" appearance.

The central tangle of the first volume revolves around Ferenczi, Elma with whom he fell in love, and Elma's mother, Gizella Palos, with whom Ferenczi was engaged and whom he eventually married. Gizella's first husband may have taken his life on the day of the wedding ceremony. Ferenczi had already analyzed both Gizella, who was older than he, and Elma; then Ferenczi sent both Elma and Gizella to Freud to get his judgment. Ferenczi later underwent a personal analysis with Freud. To make matters more complicated, Freud entrusted Jones's analysis to Ferenczi. Freud himself analyzed Elma for a few months, after which she went back into treatment with Ferenczi in Budapest. Eventually Ferenczi decided, on Freud's advice, against marrying Elma.

Haynal's introduction makes the point that clinically "many indiscretions" were committed by Freud and Ferenczi, although such a characterization seems to me too discreet to fit the human complexities in which Freud and Ferenczi had become engaged. All these early analysts seem to have felt themselves beyond the constraints of customary morality, for they thought of themselves as constructing new standards of good and evil. Freud may have been acting out of the best and most generous intentions and even may have appreciated the dangers of the corruption of power, but he allowed himself to go ahead anyway. It is now some thirty years since I first learned that Anna Freud had been analyzed by her own father, and however wild and hair-raising such a procedure had to be, I think we can now see how it fit into a series of other practices in which early analysts behaved as if they were exempt from the restraints that civilized life has traditionally relied upon.

Freud and Ferenczi wrote back and forth more than once a week, over a period of many years. They could count on mail delivery between Vienna and Budapest taking about a day. Right from the start Freud aspired to have Ferenczi found a separate psychoanalytic group, but that ambition was not finally to take place until 1913. The Hungarian analysts always maintained their own characteristic

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tendencies, at least up until Ferenczi's death. Ferenczi's warmth and humanity inspired a whole group of practitioners who were not as naïve as North Americans about the implications of the written recommendations Freud published on how he thought beginners should go about avoiding mistakes. In 1910, for example, Ferenczi reported as Freud's "newest principle . . . that technique has to direct itself according to the uniqueness of each case," which might seem to undermine Freud's whole pretense at having any general "technique" to offer.

Since this is only the first of three large volumes, it is necessary to be tentative on what we will understand about the central people at a later date. But my own impression is that in this correspondence we have Freud writing at his most unguarded. Often it has been easy for commentators to be misled by Freud's capacities as a stylist. He could beguile and entrance his readers, all the while holding himself back at a considerable human distance. With Ferenczi, however, Freud let his hair down and trusted him, so that we find here passages that are historically fascinating.

For example, Lou Andreas-Salomé wanted to come visit Ferenczi for a few days in 1913, after completing a stay with Freud. Freud writes of her: "Her interests are really of a purely intellectual nature; she is a highly significant woman, even though all the tracks around her go into the lion's den but none come out." An editorial note reminds us of Aesop's fable in which the lion, lying ill in his den, asks the fox why he doesn't come closer; the fox replies: "I would certainly come in if I didn't see that so many tracks go in but that none come out." Lou was already well known as Nietzsche's expositor and a woman of letters, and there is an abridged volume of the correspondence that she and Freud exchanged; she ended up a practicing analyst, an intimate friend of Anna Freud, and Freud wrote an obituary of her after her death. But I was fascinated to find Freud also writing, in the same letter introducing her to Ferenczi, of her liaison with Victor Tausk, a local analyst about whom Freud had highly ambivalent feelings. Freud communicated to Ferenczi: "She has become very friendly with Tausk and is very vigorously championing his cause, which is becoming difficult for me. If you see her, ask her about it and arrive at your own opinion so that we will have a point of departure as to how we should relate to him." A subsequent letter from Ferenczi to Freud reports that he did try to "find out about Tausk from Frau Lou," but left it for a visit of Ferenczi's to Vienna to report what little he was able to learn.

All specialists on early psychoanalysis will find important nuggets of information in these letters. My own special interest in the relationship that Freud, Lou, and Tausk had has been a long-standing one, but I would never have thought that Freud would have written so freely to Ferenczi. The Freud-Ferenczi correspondence is an extraordinarily intimate human document, and one awaits the further volumes with the greatest interest.

One central complaint comes to mind about the way Freud letters are being presented to the public. The Freud Copyrights in London, in behalf of Freud's heirs, decides which texts are next to come out, and, in the case of the Harvard University Press, it seems eager to be cooperative. As fine as the translations appear to be (the German texts are still not available), and as conscientious as the editing has been, I

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am sorry to report that I found no fewer than a dozen editorial errors. For example, we are told that "Freud's sons all emigrated to London and died without returning to Vienna." In fact, Oliver Freud, the middle son, came straight from Europe to America, where he eventually died. And Sandor Rado was definitely not "the brilliant young patient" Ferenzi was hoping to rely on in 1910; Rado became editor of the *Zeitschrift* in 1924, not 1942. When Freud refers to his brother and sister-in-law having gone to Venice in 1909, the editors do not seem to realize that Freud's brother had just gotten married, and therefore they suggest the unlikely idea that Freud's brother was traveling with Freud's wife's sister, Minna, who has become notorious for supposedly having had an affair with Freud. Another note tells us that "in 1934" Anna Freud "took over from Helene Deutsch as director of the Training Institute of the Vienna Society"; but the true date of Helene Deutsch's resignation from her position was 1935, and the functions she had performed were split between Anna Freud and Edward Bibring. And despite what a note tells us, it is not true that Freud "kept a Busch album in his waiting room"; such a text was reported to be there before World War I, but not by the 1920s. Further, it seems to me extremely dubious to think that René Spitz was anything like Freud's first patient for a training analysis. Also, Edoardo Weiss never emigrated from Italy to England, but instead came directly to the United States. The general reader need not be concerned with these or other slip-ups that I came across.

But it is generally instructive, if frightening, to think that once a mistake gets into print how much scholarly effort will be necessary to shake it out. I can immediately think of at least half a dozen people, and actually there are a good deal more, to whom a university press should be circulating drafts of edited volumes of Freud's letters. It would then be a simple matter to minimize the possibility of unnecessary errors arising, especially since the Freud-Ferenczi correspondence is so important.

One paragraph, sent from Ferenczi to Freud in 1910, does stand out, leaving me more bewildered than ever about what these people thought they were up to. Ferenczi sends Freud what he calls "a personal observation":

> I never have sexual intercourse at *night*—only in the morning. But one is 'sober' in the morning; the compulsion-like urge (i.e., a part of the libido) is missing in the act. But if one still lets oneself be enraptured to moderate excesses, one becomes almost incapable of work during the day because of neurasthenic parasthesias, headache, heaviness in the legs, etc. I.e., the act had the character of masturbation. The satisfaction, as well as potency, was *incomparably greater*, and in fact, devoid of the slightest pathological reaction if the act was carried out without exception in the late afternoon.

In the midst of all the bizarre-seeming exchanges between Freud and Ferenczi, and granted how idiosyncratic sex can be, this passage seems to me almost dotty. There is not any answer on this particular point from Freud, although Ferenczi had been expressing himself within Freud's conceptual framework. Perhaps I have concentrated too much on a few editorial howlers, in a text which is otherwise superbly edited, because I am still so uncertain what in the long run one should make of the whole story of Freud and Ferenczi, or of the psychoanalytic revolution in the history of ideas that they both did so much to forward.

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The Reader Replies

The Nobel Prize for Literature

Renee Winegarten in the Winter 1994 AMERICAN SCHOLAR argues that, in awarding the Nobel Prize for Literature, the Swedish Academy tends to view authors as a function of nationality, "since the writer's language itself, as the essential medium or voice, is usually bound to place of birth, and can somehow mysteriously convey the spirit of a country and a people." As "notable exceptions to the rule," Professor Winegarten adduces Conrad, Kafka, and Nabokov, "all of whom became masters of an adopted language." And of course none of them won the Nobel Prize.

However, a glance at the roster of those who did win the prize suggests that translingualism—literary achievement in a language other than one's native tongue—is not especially exceptional among Nobel laureates. Those whose major work was written in an adopted language include Wole Soyinka, Elias Canetti, Samuel Beckett, S. Y. Agnon, Rabindranath Tagore, and Frédéric Mistral. In addition, Eugenio Montale, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Czeslaw Milosz, and Joseph Brodsky have created occasional translingual texts. T. S. Eliot even wrote a few poems in French, though they are not what earned him the Nobel Prize.

STEVEN G. KELLMAN
University of Texas
San Antonio, Texas

RENEE WINEGARTEN replies: Professor Kellman hastens to draw a conclusion from my words that was not intended on my part in my essay "The Nobel Prize for Literature." The strong element of nationality and ethnic identity is all too apparent in many of the award citations made by the Swedish Academy—indeed, I quoted a few of them. Feeling rather ambivalent about this element, though not wishing to deny its importance, I added that the language of a writer's birth could be seen as an aspect of nationality. However, I sought a proviso in an aside on writers who had mastered an adopted language. The names I mentioned—Conrad, Kafka, Nabokov—happened to be major writers to whom I had already alluded. They were "notable exceptions" but that did not mean they were the only ones. And I certainly did not single them out to make a point that they had not won the Nobel Prize for this reason, as Professor Kellman appears to suggest. In an age that produced so remarkable a bilingual prizewinner as Samuel Beckett, it would be absurd for me to imply any such thing.

Iatrogenic Government

The title of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's thoughtful essay suggests that he has clearly recognized that at least one proximate cause of our current nationwide problem with drug abuse is "iatrogenic" government failure, those intentional federal policies that interfere with the usual market mechanism for psychoactive drugs and create instead burgeoning black markets, rich and violent beyond comprehension.

Mr. Moynihan's heartfelt and well-deserved tribute to Norman Zinberg's research studies on the subtle and complex nuances of drug, set, and setting that influence individual and group behaviors for psychoactive substance use also indicates an understanding that causes and solutions are not as simple as the Reaganesque "Just Say No" mantra of the 1980s.

It is surprising then that Moynihan lapses back into a 1980s mindset of polarized positions, unshaded extremes of either all or none, when he observes that our federal policy choices allow for only two polar outcomes—either an enormous crime problem (due to our present prohibition policies) or an enormous public health problem

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(due to legalization of currently illicit drugs).

Although Moynihan castigates the medical profession for contributing little to the drug policy debate, there is an abundant and recent public health literature that suggests that a compromise policy, neither failed prohibition nor libertarian legalization, would fit nicely with Norman Zinberg's observations that each drug has unique characteristics based on its route, dose, pattern and setting of use, and most importantly, on the expectations of the user and his or her social group.

Nadelmann, Warner, and others have argued and written convincingly that a model of decriminalization of most of the currently illicit psychoactive/intoxicant drugs with strict regulation of dose, purity, time, and place of use, plus a focused restriction on use by minors—an improved tobacco/alcohol model—would likely result in a degree of harm reduction that would decrease *both* the enormous crime problem and the public health consequences of untreated, abusive use of these substances.

Senator Moynihan's scenario need not be the zero-sum game described. The simplistic and failed "Just Say No" solution of the 1980s should be set aside and alternative federal policies, based on Zinberg's insights and a harm reduction objective, should receive thoughtful public debate within our congressional and executive branches. A non-zero-sum outcome with winners in both the crime prevention and disease prevention arenas can be expected from such deliberations.

NORMAN S. MARKS, M.D.
Lafayette, Indiana

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN replies: Dr. Marks states the issue very well, indeed. I would hope that more members of the medical profession would join this debate. As, significantly, Federal judges have begun to do.

Erratum

The editors regret that in Charles W. McCutchen's letter concerning Freeman Dyson's "Science in Trouble" (in The Reader Replies section of the Winter 1994 issue of the SCHOLAR), there was an unfortunate error. The sentence "When Freeman Dyson was asked to serve on a panel to oversee the National Institutes of Health's investigation of the ethics of Robert Gallo, he nevertheless wrote about it (THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Autumn 1993, p. 513–525)" should have read: "When Freeman Dyson was asked to serve on a panel to oversee the National Institutes of Health's investigation of the ethics of Robert Gallo, he refused. Having turned down a chance to learn about the matter, he nevertheless wrote about it. . . ."

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edited by
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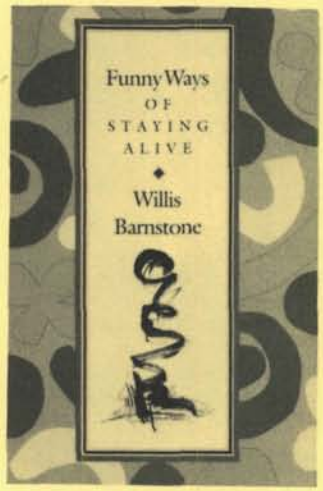

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